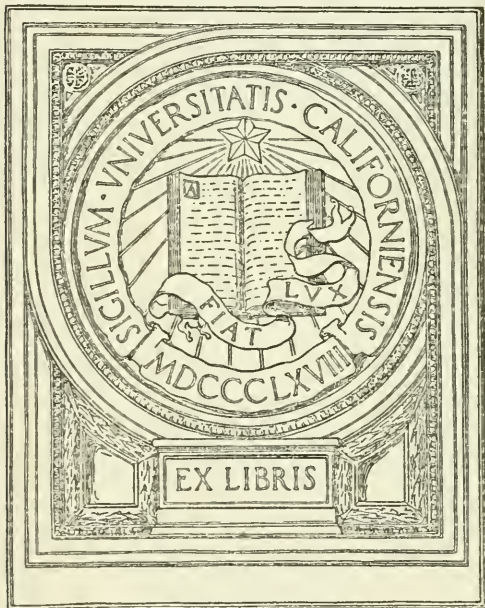


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THE BIVOUAC;

OR

STORIES OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.

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THE
B I V O U A C ;
OR
STORIES OF
THE PENINSULAR WAR.

BY W. H. MAXWELL,

AUTHOR OF

“STORIES OF WATERLOO,” “WILD SPORTS OF THE WEST,” &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE BIVOUC.

THE CARD-CASE.

BARDOLPH. Sir John, you are so fretful, you cannot live long.

KING HENRY IV.

HOTSPUR. Tell me, tell me,
How show'd his tasking? Seem'd it in contempt?

VERNON. No, by my soul; I never in my life,
Did hear a challenge urged more modestly.

Ibid.

CAIUS. Vat be you all, one, two, tree, four, come for?

HOST. To see thee fight.

* * * * *

PAGE. Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter.

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.



THE BIVOUC.

CHAPTER I.

THE CARD-CASE.

IT was soon after the affair of New Ross that I obtained leave of absence from the general of the district, and repaired to the metropolis. I had been wounded by a rebel from a window with a slug; and though it traversed the bone without causing any injury, yet from the eccentric direction it had taken, an experienced practitioner was required to discover and extract it.

Two or three days after the operation had been successfully performed, I found myself able to move about, and set out to visit some of my acquaintances, who happened to be sojourning to

the capital. Among others there was a kinsman of my mother, named Roderick O'Dogherty. He resided constantly in town, occupying a small house in Kildare-street, and thither I directed my course.

Roderick was the youngest son of my grand-uncle. He had him educated for a priest, but Roderick preferred the trade of arms. Early in life he entered the Austrian service, and through many ups and downs of fortune, raised himself to the rank of Major-general, with the reputation of being a stout soldier. An unexpected succession to the property of a distant relative, fortunately enabled the general to retire from a profession, for which wounds and bad health had nearly rendered him unfit; and with the cross of Maria Theresa, a small pension, and a rich crop of laurels—if his own account were true—Roderick quitted Germany for his native land, and established himself comfortably in the capital. Ten years had passed since he had honoured Dublin with his presence, and time, which ameliorates

many of the ills of life, had certainly wrought no change for the better in either the health or temper of my mother's kinsman, the worthy commander.

Whether his claims rested upon reputation in arms or on acquired wealth, no man exacted more attention from his relations to the third and fourth generation, than Roderick O'Dogherty. The most constant and punctilious inquiries after his health were indispensable, and the slightest omission was booked in the tablets of his memory against the unhappy offender. To visit him, Heaven knows, was any thing but an agreeable duty. If he happened to be gouty or rheumatic, one was doomed to listen patiently to a narrative of his sufferings, and the deepest sympathy expected in return for this condescension on his part, in favouring you with a detail of his afflictions. If there was any abatement of his numerous maladies, the unhappy visiter was martyred with interminable anecdotes of the seven years' war, and the exploits of a Baron Puffenberg, to whom half a

century before the gallant general had been aide-de-camp.

Of all Roderick's kindred, I, probably, was the least assiduous in my attentions. Most of them were more closely related than myself, and therefore, I was not likely to figure in his last will and testament. In his best humour the commander was a bore, and in his ill-temper a firebrand. I was not obliged, I thought, to listen to long stories, or submit to his irritability, especially as it was more than doubtful that after he had been gathered to his fathers, I should find in the disposition of his effects any consideration for the same.

On hearing that I had been wounded and was in town, Roderick had despatched his valet, Philip Clancy, to inquire for me at my hotel. This civility on the commander's part, of course demanded a suitable return—and on the morning in question, the first visit I made was to my distinguished relative.

I knocked at the door, and his man admitted

me. One of honest Philip's intelligent looks told me "to prepare for squalls." "The ould gentleman had the divil's night of it!" he whispered as I mounted the stairs. "There was no standing him this morning, good or bad. He was as short in the temper as cat's hair, and would fret a saint, let alone a sinner like me." With this pleasant intimation, and the prospect of an agreeable *tête-à-tête*, I was conducted to the presence.

I found the commander ensconced in an easy chair with his infirm foot resting on a hassock, and a thick-winded pug reposing before the sounder member. I looked at my distinguished relative, and a crosser-looking elderly gentleman a dog never barked at! If, as it was said, the Irish adventurers so frequently found in the ranks of continental princes, were as dangerous to the fair as formidable to their enemies, I am persuaded that Roderick was a virtuous exception. He was now a little pury man, fat enough for a friar, with thin legs and small gray eyes, ready

to fire up at the slightest provocation. His nose was short and up-turned, and had never been an organ that a statuary would have selected for a cast. Yet, stunted as it was, a Hulan, it appeared, had fancied it for sabre practice, and by a bisecting scar rendered it the more remarkable. The commander was wrapped in a flannel dressing-gown, and wore a purple velvet nightcap. His hair, white as snow, was combed back into a queue, and secured with an ample bow of black ribbon. As a sort of moral for a soldier's use, there was no weapon visible in the apartment; while a crutch standing in one corner gave silent intimation that the warrior's career was done.

The pug hated me; and I, when I could manage a sly kick, returned the compliment. He barked at me to the best of his ability, until exhausted by the exertion, he lay down again panting for breath, while his worthy master bade me welcome.

“Down, Beauty—Down, I say. You are so seldom here that Beauty takes you for a stranger. Well—so you had that slug extracted.

Pish! Nowadays men make a work about nothing. I remember Count Schroeder got a musket-bullet in the hip, at Breda, and he had it out and was on horseback again the second morning. Soldiers were soldiers then! What the devil were you about at Ross? You managed matters prettily."

"I think we did," I replied stoutly.

"Pish! Why did you let the rebels into the town?"

"Why—because we could not keep them out."

"Pshaw!" he growled testily. "I tell you how poor dear Puffenberg and I would have managed matters. We would have laned them with artillery—guns double loaded with grape and canister at point-blank distance—charged while the head of the column was broken, and supported the cavalry with—"

"We had no artillery but a few battalion pieces and a couple of old ship-guns."

"Humph!" growled the commander. "Why not try cavalry?"

“Cavalry could not act. The masses were dense, the street filled with pikemen, and the windows crowded with musketeers. What impression could cavalry make against rebels in close column with pikes sixteen feet long?”

“Humph!”

“It was the gallantest affair during the rebellion, and old Johnson fought it nobly.”

“Humph! Well, you dine here to-day at five? You’ll meet your cousin Hector.”

“I am unfortunately engaged.”

“Humph! Always engaged. No matter. I want to talk to you to-morrow. Come to breakfast. Not later than eleven. Mind that.”

I assented, and promised to be punctual.

“Hector is not pleasing me. I’m failing fast. He knows it. But if he disoblige me, and thinks I have not resolution enough to cut him off with a shilling—clip him close as a gamecock—he don’t know Roderick O’Dogherty. Well, I see you are in a hurry, so good morning.”

I left him, glad of escaping more of the reminiscences of Baron Puffenberg; and as I was being let out, found Hector the hope of the O'Dogherties knocking at the door. He turned with me down the street, and at once commenced a detail of his sufferings, and a diatribe touching his uncle's parsimony. No one was worse calculated to dance attendance on a peevish invalid than Roderick's heir-apparent. He was a wild, headstrong, mercurial character—a union of opposite qualities—a mixture of good and evil, and unhappily for himself, the latter predominated.

Hector was scarcely twenty, and one of the handsomest lads I ever saw. His education was imperfect and his principles lax. Had he been carefully brought up, and the bad portions of his disposition eradicated while a boy, he might have made a valuable man. But he had been spoiled by a weak mother—his vices had been permitted to run riot—and at the early age of twenty, Hector was a gambler and a duellist.

His means—those of the son of an embarrassed gentleman—were not flourishing ; but his credit, based upon the expectancy of succeeding to the property of his uncle the general, kept him afloat. Nevertheless, a desperate love of play placed him in eternal difficulties, and his pugnacious spirit was under a constant excitement. His end was what might be easily anticipated. He quarrelled at a billiard-table with a gambler as fiery and wayward as himself, and, as we say in Connaught, was left next morning “quivering on a daisy.”

Hector took my arm.

“Lord—I’m so glad to meet you, Pat ! You have been with old square-toes. Did he blow me up ? ”

“Why he did hint something about clipping you like a game-cock, and marking his affection by the bequest of a shilling.”

“Oh—the crossgrained rogue ! Pat, you would pity me, if you knew half what I undergo. Because he allows me a beggarly hundred a year,

every quarter's check accompanied by a groan that would lead a stranger to suppose the old curmudgeon was in convulsions and a torrent of abuse that a pickpocket would not stand, I must visit him twice a day, dine with him on mutton chops, dawdle four hours over a rascally pint of sherry, and listen to his d—d yarns about Puffenberg and Schroeder, and the siege of Breda. Does he suspect that I shake the elbow?"

"Of that, Hector, I'll tell you more after breakfast to-morrow. I am going to him by special appointment, to hear a full detail of your delinquencies."

"Do you dine with the old tiger to-day?"

"I should be devilish sorry to interrupt your *tête-à-tête*. I told him I was engaged."

"Ah!—if I dare refuse! But one whisper that I handled a cue or threw a main, and my ruin was complete. I am forced to humour the old salamander, though it breaks my heart. Well, you will meet me at Darcy's? We'll have a grilled bone, and some sober conversation."

I declined; but Hector was so urgent, that at last I reluctantly consented. The truth was, he had already embroiled me in a quarrel, and introduced me, on one occasion, to a gaming-house where I had been pretty smartly plucked.

The lieutenant burst into a loud laugh—
“Well said—Pat. Hang it, we never gave you the credit you deserve for high morality, and anti-duelling principles into the bargain.”

O'Brien coloured, and replied, “Many, Lorimer, have been misunderstood; and such has been my case. Circumstances involved me in some unfortunate affairs, and obtained for me a character which I neither coveted nor deserved. Quarrels that I never courted have been forced upon me, and accident implicated me in disputes, from which nothing but a visit to the field could safely exonerate me as a soldier. There are about me now some two or three, *men* by profession, but *boys* in years and experience. Hear me, lads; and listen to my candid advice. Avoid a duellist as a nuisance—a gambler as the devil!

The first is bad enough; but he is innocent when compared with the second. True, he may involve you in a quarrel, but chance may extricate you uninjured, or you may escape with a broken bone—but from the other there is no deliverance. Titled or untitled it is all the same. He who will not spare wife, children, kindred, friends—will he show mercy to an acquaintance? Trust me, no honour binds him. The gambler, when he has you in his hand, will fleece you to the last guinea. Hope nothing from his name—nothing from his character. Though his lineage be old as the Conqueror—though his name be one that fortune enrols as foremost in her list—‘the man’s a man for a’ that.’ He plays, and is obnoxious to plunder himself; and if he can do it he plunders in return. The duellist is bad enough, but—”

“Why, d—n it, Pat, you have fought four times yourself!”

“I have, and I regret it. One unfortunate affair, I lament to add, has left this hand bloody.

I have been twice as often in the field as second ; and, thank God, no friend whom I accompanied fell. I have, unluckily, when honourable mediation was rejected or impracticable, been necessitated to resort to the last and worst alternative the code of honour sanctions ; but, believe me, boys, he who is from necessity party to a duel, will never experience more pleasure than when he brings two brave men from the ground, uninjured in person and reputation."

"This is a new doctrine of O'Brien's," said a young subaltern. "And we are not to fight, it seems?"

O'Brien regarded the speaker sternly.

"Fielding, I have a nephew about your own years, who carries the king's colours of the 52d. He is the only child of a devoted mother ; her first thought, her last prayer, is for the safety of her beloved boy. Were he insulted—mark my words—and did not assert his honour, I would pass him as an outcast—turn from him as a leper. No, boy, the honour of a gentleman should

be his first care. The man whose courage is established is very seldom called upon; and the man who will fight will rarely volunteer a quarrel. Hence, the brave pass through life generally unoffending others and unmolested themselves."

"How came it then, Pat, that with those feelings you have been so particularly unfortunate?"

"Simply because I joined a regiment that was miserably divided among themselves. County politics were its cause—patronage was shamefully abused—men of obscure birth and disreputable character obtained commissions; and in the ——— militia there were persons who should have worn no epaulet, except a footman's. But why waste good counsel upon idle boys? all is lost upon them; and though speaking for the last five minutes like an oracle, I might just as well have been whistling jigs to a milestone. But to resume my story. Fortunately for myself I was an hour too late in keeping my engagement with my cousin; and when I reached Earl-street, found

Darcy's whole establishment in desperate commotion. There were in every direction the eye turned to incontestable symptoms of a general row; and the mortal remains of plates, dishes, and decanters, were strewn about the room, thick as leaves in Vallombrosa. From a waiter, who had been complimented with a black eye, I learned some particulars of the battle. Hector had been there, and ordered supper; sate down in expectation of my arrival, and managed to kill time while waiting for me by quarrelling with a military party in the opposite box. Two or three Connaught gentlemen espoused his cause of course, it being the wrong one, and a desperate onslaught was the consequence. In the *mélée* D'Arcy's goods and chattels were demolished—challenges given and accepted—cards interchanged by the pack—the watch called in—and my excellent cousin borne off in triumph, after performing prodigies of valour by maiming divers of the king's subjects. Having secretly returned thanks to Heaven for my lucky escape, I

directed my steps to the watchhouse to visit my afflicted kinsman.

I reached the place, and thinking it prudent to reconnoitre before I made my *entrée*, I peeped slyly over the hatch. There was Hector, with sundry other malefactors, in “*durance vile*.” By a stranger my cousin might have been readily mistaken for the commander of the garrison, he appeared so perfectly at home, and exercised such absolute authority. The constable of the night and Roderick’s heir presumptive were seated in close conclave in a corner, and from their position being contiguous to the door, I could overhear the whole colloquy. Dogberry was remonstrating.

“Arrah, Hecthur astore.* Arrah, now it’s too bad—the third night this week. Have ye no conscience, man, in tattering that unfortunate tailor out of bed. Upon my sowl, he has a cough that would scar ye. He’s a wakely divil; and as his wife said the last night, if ye’ll drag

* *Anglice*, Hector darling.

him out of his warm bed, ye'll have his life to answer for."

"Pshaw!" ejaculated the prisoner. "He charges for all in the account. I never knock him up for bail but he lays it thick upon the next order. Send for him, Brady; get in as much porter and whiskey as will make all drunk, and we'll sit down comfortably at the fire."

"Make way for Mistur O'Dogherty," roared divers of the body-guard. "Get up, you in the corner there. Arrah! get out of the way; the gentleman's a regular customer, and we don't see you above twice in the twelvemonth." The seat of honour was directly vacated by the minor delinquent, and my excellent kinsman ceremoniously inducted thereunto.

From an imperfect view it struck me that Hector's person had not suffered material damage; but his disordered appearance, and clothes torn to ribbons, clearly proved that the affair though short had been both sharp and spirited. Perceiving that my interference was unnecessary, I thought

it no hour for salutations and quickly retreated to "mine inn," leaving the task of Hector's deliverance to the worthy artist, who, as it would appear, was my cousin's "standing bail."

Next day I repaired to Kildare-street in due time; and it was lucky that I was so regular, for Phil made a most alarming report. Overnight the gout had seized upon Roderick's better member; he was in considerable pain, and as Clancy said, "the priest himself darn't go near him." To add to the misfortune, several gentlemen had called early in the morning, stated their business to be urgent, and could scarcely be restrained by the valet from invading the sacred precincts of the commander's bedroom. Thus Roderick had been disturbed before his time, was consequently in most abominable temper, and I, alas! should in all likelihood be obliged to bear the first burst of gout and irritability.

I found him in company with his pug—*par-nobile*—Ireland could not match them. Roderick was ready for battle; and though it was not five

minutes past eleven, he rated me for the delay. Breakfast passed, and the General commenced :

“ I had an infernal night of it—gout in the knee first; then moved to the ankle; lame in both legs; no sleep; could have dozed a little in the morning, when three scoundrels, with knocks that I thought would have demolished the door, disturbed me. Well they did not break into my bedroom! Private business forsooth. I’m pestered with fellows of their kind; force their way up under false pretences, all for one purpose—begging—begging. I have found Aladdin’s lamp, I suppose. All—priests and parsons—all ring to the same tune—money, money. ‘No family—blest with independence,’ and other cant to effect one’s spoliation. Hish! what a twinge! D—n it, you never had the gout, and have no more feeling for me than if I was a glandered horse!”

I assured him of my deep sympathy; but I suspect the terms I expressed it in were not over ardent.

“Humph!” he growled. “All words—mere words of course. But, regarding Hector—I hear he is dissipated—drinks—brawls—plays. I want you to ascertain the truth, and give me quiet and confidential information of his general proceedings.”

I fired at the proposition, and losing all dread of the commander boldly renounced the commission.

“Why, sir, what the devil do you take me for? I turn spy upon my kinsman! By heaven! if a stranger proposed such an employment, he should dearly repent that he offered such an indignity.”

The commander felt the rebuke, and began muttering what he intended as a qualification.

“No, Pat—no. D—n it, I did not mean that you should be a spy; but—but—”

“But, sir, yours was a proposition which no gentleman could listen to; and I wish you a good morning.”

“Stop, I say—stop!” The hall-bell rang

violently. "Confound it! the hotness of young men's tempers is nowadays intolerable. This is I suppose one of these damned visitors; but if I don't despatch him in double quick, my name's not Roderick!"

The commander was right in his supposition. Clancy announced the stranger as one of the sleep-breakers; handed in a card, on which was engraved, "Mr. Alleyn, 40th Regiment;" and next moment the gentleman was ushered in.

He was quite a lad, and also a very young soldier; for whether it was the importance of his embassy, or the vinegar aspect of the comrade of Baron Puffenberg that abashed him I know not, but he coloured up to the eyes, and seemed to be in evident confusion. I pointed to a chair—a civility which Roderick had omitted; and the following colloquy ensued:

"You are General O'Dogherty?" said the stranger as he referred to a visiting-ticket in his hand.

"Yes, sir, I have that honour; and you, sir,

are Mr. Alleyn?" and the surly commander examined the young man's card.

"Yes, sir, my name is Alleyn; and, sir—hem—it has given me pain, to be obliged—hem—to call on you—for—"

"Sir—I understand you—I am a plain man, and hate long speeches. In a word, sir, you might have spared your call; it will procure you nothing from me."

"This is very strange, sir—your character—"

"Pish! sir. I don't care a fig what any man says—and to cut short the interview, you may be off and try some other fool."

"Sir—this is unaccountable! I am not experienced in such matters, and confess I am rather embarrassed—"

"No doubt, sir, a common consequence of imprudence. I am busy, sir, and you intrude."

The young man reddened to the ears.

"Sir, this won't do. If you think to bully, you are mistaken. I insist on an immediate explanation."

“ Why, zounds ! Do you threaten me in my own house ? I suppose you intend committing a burglary. Here, Clancy, show him the door.”

“ You shall hear me, sir ! I have claims upon you that must be satisfied before I leave this.”

“ Why, you audacious scoundrel ! Go for a peace officer, Clancy. I’ll have you settled.”

“ Ah ! I understand you ; and it is time to leave you, sir, when you resort to the police. But let me say, that your conduct is ungentlemanly, and your meanness disgraceful to the profession you dishonour.”

Roderick seized upon the nearest weapon of offence, the crutch, while Clancy by bodily force fairly ejected the visiter. He was expelled with great reluctance, and departed from the house vowing vengeance against the commander.

Roderick was nearly suffocated with fat and passion. He growled like a worried bear ; while smart twinges of his disorder, accelerated no doubt by recent irritation, came faster and fiercer on.

“ I wish I knew where the scoundrel could be found, I would indict him. I would, by every thing litigious, for attempting to obtain money by intimidation. Hish!—my toe—my toe! The villain—to fancy that I was to be bullied. Hish!—Hish! Another fit brought on.”

He continued grumbling and groaning for a quarter of an hour, until the malady abated, and his violent excitement had exhausted itself. Once more I rose to take my departure, when another thundering summons was heard at the hall-door—another card introduced—and immediately after, “ Captain Coolaghan of the South Cork” was ushered into the presence of the ex-general. He too, as Phil Clancy mentioned in a whisper, was one of the sleep-breakers.

If the former visiter had evinced some diffidence in the opening of the interview, there was no indication of any tendency to blushing on the part of Captain Coolaghan of the South Cork. I examined his figure hastily—for it was rather remarkable. In age he was above fifty ; in height, I should say, approaching to seven feet. His

shoulders were broad—his legs thin—while his whole appearance had what the Irish call “a shuck look,” and told plainly that the visiter had never considered abstinence and water-drinking necessary for his soul’s weal. No man could be better satisfied with himself, or deemed his place in society less equivocal. He entered Roderick’s “great chamber” with a smile, nodded graciously to us both, established himself in a chair, produced a silver snuffbox of immense capacity, took a deep pinch, and then protruding his long chin sundry inches beyond his black stock, politely inquired, “which of the gentlemen was the gineral?”

A more infelicitous opening to an interview could not have been conceived. That there could be any doubt of his identity, or that the imprint of his former glory was not stamped upon his exterior, was death to Roderick; and quickly did he remove the stranger’s uncertainty.

“*I, sir!*” He exclaimed testily. “*I am Major-general O’Dogherty.*”

“Then, sir,” responded the visiter, “*I am*

proud of the pleasure of making your acquaintance. Your friend, I presume?" and he bowed graciously to me.

"Yes, sir; and here with me on particular business."

"I comprehend—all right;" and Captain Coolaghan closed his left eye knowingly. "We may proceed to business then at once; and faith, when a man kicks up a dust and gets into scrapes, why the sooner the thing's settled the better."

"Kicks up a dust—gets into scrapes! Why, sir, what the devil do you mean?" exclaimed the friend of Puffenberg, as he looked daggers at his new acquaintance of the South Cork.

"Why then, indeed, general, your treatment of my young friend of the 40th, was not the civilest in the world. But come, come—when men grow ould they always get cranky. We ought to make allowances. God knows, neither you nor I, when we come to his years, will be able to kick up such a rookawn;"* and he smiled

* *Anglice*, scene of confusion.

and nodded at me; while Roderick, who was making himself up for mischief, impatiently exclaimed in a voice almost smothered by passion—

“Who the devil are you? What do you mean? What do you want?”

“Faith, and I can answer you all. My name, Charles Coolaghan, of the South Cork—my maning, that you insulted my friend; and my business, a written apology. But come, we won’t be too hard—We’ll try and plaister it up without burning powder. Say ye were drunk. Do what my young friend asks, and there will be no more about it.”

Roderick who had with great difficulty waited for the close of the ambassador’s address, now awfully exploded.

“Captain Coolaghan, sir. There is one thing I regret.”

“Arrah, stop general. It must be on paper—just for the sake of form. We won’t publish it. We won’t upon my honour.”

“Blood and thunder! Hear me, sir. What I

regret is, that I did not knock out the scoundrel's brains; and if your business is in any way connected with him, I beg, sir, you'll oblige me with your absence."

"Well, upon my conscience," returned he of the South Cork, "a more unchristian kind of an ould gintleman I never talked to! You—with one foot in the grave—arrah, for the sake of your poor sowl, you ought to make atonement. Come, give us what we want—write the apology—say you were drunk—and—"

"Why you infernal scoundrel!" Up jumped the captain—up rose the general—I flung myself between them. Coolaghan had seized his cane—Roderick grasped his crutch—while Phil Clancy, hearing the fresh uproar, rushed into the room, and was directed by his master to exclude the visiter, and that too, if necessary, *vi et armis*. The captain slowly retired, notifying his wrath as he departed.

"Ye ould firebrand—sure gout and age should have taken the divil out of ye before this. Killing waiters—murdering a whole company—and

when gintlemen sind for satisfaction, nothing but the grossest abuse ! But I'll have ye out. Troth I'll parade ye on the fifteen acres ; ay, if you come hopping there upon that wooden prop ;—or if ye don't, I'll post ye over Ireland—ye cantankerous—ould—desperate—”

The rest was lost in his descent of the staircase ; but the terrific slam of the hall-door told plainly enough, that Captain Coolaghan of the South Cork had “ exited ” in a rage.

“ Pat,” said the commander, as he endeavoured to recover breath, “ bring me my pistols. If any more of these ruffians come, I'll shoot them though I hang for it. Holy Mary ! ” and he crossed himself devoutly. “ What sins have I committed, that a poor, quiet, easy-tempered old man can't in his last days, his own house, and a land of liberty, remain in his afflictions, without being tortured by a gang of villains, who first beg, then try robbery, and if you don't submit to plunder, coolly propose your assassination ? ”

A thundering rap interrupted the *jérémiade*

of the unfortunate commander. Up ran Phil Clancy pale as a ghost.

“Another of them divils, that was here this morning,” quoth the valet.

“Let him up”—replied the general, while his brows contracted, and his look bespoke desperate determination. “Let him up. If I miss him with the crutch, do you, Pat, knock him down with the poker.” And Puffenberg’s confederate prepared for action, and I to witness the termination of a scene, that at present was strange and inexplicable.

The door opened—a very fashionable-looking dragoon presented himself—inquired “if General O’Dogherty was at home?” and on being answered in the affirmative, begged to have “Captain Hay of the Fifteenth” announced as having called. Roderick, with more politeness than I expected, after his recent visitations, struck with the superior manner and address of the new comer, requested him to take a chair, and then intimated that the general was present. The dragoon

looked rather sceptically at the commander, and then turned his eyes on me.

“ Really, gentlemen,” he said, “ I feel myself a little puzzled. You, sir,” as he addressed me, “ seem far too young to have attained that honourable standing in the army. And you, sir,” and he turned to Roderick, “ much too infirm for the extraordinary exertions which last night’s affair at Darcy’s must have required ’

The commander stared—while a faint and glimmering notion of the business flashed across my mind. Of course I kept my suspicions to myself, and the general testily, but politely, entreated the captain of cavalry to be more explicit.

“ May I inquire, in the first place, which is the general ? ”

The commander, with great dignity, announced himself to be the real Simon Pure.

“ There must be a palpable mistake in the whole business ;” and the light dragoon laughed. “ May I ask, without intending the slightest disrespect, if you supped at Darcy’s last night ? ”

“Supped at the devil!” exclaimed the admirer of Baron Puffenberg. “Sir, I beg your pardon. Excuse my being irritable. Bad gout, sir. Saints would swear under half the provocation I have endured since daybreak. You’ll forgive me?”

The captain smiled and bowed.

“My dear sir,” continued Roderick, “I have not been out of my house these three months.”

“Then,” said the dragoon, “my conjectures are correct; and it is impossible that you could be the gentleman who knocked down Captain Edwards, blackened Mr. Heywood’s eye, and broke the waiter’s arm with a chair.”

My worthy kinsman repeated the charges categorically in a tone of voice so ludicrous, that neither Captain Hay nor I could refrain from laughing; and then added,

“Really, sir, I am astonished, and at a loss to know why such inquiry should be made of me.”

“The simplest reply, sir,” returned the dra-

goon, "will be given in the Hibernian style, by asking another question. Pray, sir, is this card yours?" and he handed one to the friend of Puffenberg.

The general rubbed the glasses of his spectacles, and examined the ticket attentively; and then with a look of unqualified surprise replied,

"It is mine—mine beyond a question!"

"Some one then has used your name and address with great freedom," observed Captain Hay.

"That person, if my suspicions be correct, shall rue his freedom dearly;" and the old man knit his brows, and desired me to ring for Clancy. He came; and the commander asked for his card-case. It was brought, and opened. No ticket of his was to be found; for those within were inscribed with Hector's name and residence. Conviction rested on the general's mind, and Clancy, ignorant of the consequences, sealed my cousin's fate. "Mr. Hector," he said, "had been fiddling with the case." Such, indeed, was the fact.

The unlucky youth, struck with the similarity between his uncle's and his own, had been examining the cases, put the wrong one in his pocket, and in the confusion of the preceding evening, had flung those of Baron Puffenberg's contemporary to his antagonists, and never discovered the mistake until the blunder had cost him an inheritance.

As to the quarrel at Darcy's—as well as I can now remember the wind up—it terminated in Capt. Coolaghan losing a finger and Hector a new hat—while one of the Connaught gentlemen, who had so handsomely volunteered his services on that fatal evening, was duly cased in lead and transmitted to the abbey of Burashool, there to repose in peace with a long and distinguished ancestry.

While these important events were being transacted, Roderick was no idler. For a fortnight he was denied to his acquaintances, and as Phil Clancy whispered, “was writing continually ;” for, as it subsequently appeared, he was engaged in

altering his will, and cutting off his unlucky nephew with a shilling, which he had the barbarity to have regularly tendered to him by his attorney. But the poor lad did not live to feel the effects of an uncle's wrath, produced by his own imprudence. He quarrelled at a hazard-table with a ruffian; he and his antagonist were men of a similar stamp—both were blacklegs, and both bullies—they adjourned of course to the field—and Hector fell.

I have only to add, that the friend and admirer of Baron Puffenberg, even after death, contrived to keep all his relatives in feuds and litigation. He left a most voluminous and unintelligible will; and in it bequeathed his property to three old maids, two grand-nephews, a cousin, and a priest; with a sum to found a friary, and a large bequest to form a fund for supplying masses for the repose of his soul. Me, he cut off one morning that I had unwittingly displeased him, with a legacy of one thousand pounds—a donation for which he expressly provided, and which, as it turned out,

was the only legacy paid. For so confused and contradictory were the remainder, and so ingeniously did one provision nullify the next one, that of course the property was thrown into chancery, and there it continues to this day.

If Roderick's deliverance from purgatory depended on the payment of the mass fund, all I can say is, that there he lies, snug and warm!"

THE RIVAL ARMIES.

By heaven! it is a splendid sight to see,
For one who hath no friend, no brother there,
Their rival scarfs of mixed embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air!

* * * * *

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice ;
Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high ;
Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies ;
The shouts are—France, Spain, Albion, Victory!

CILDE HAROLD.

CHAPTER II.

THE RIVAL ARMIES.

A MONTH had passed away, and O'Connor was in another land. The embarkation at Portsmouth of a large reinforcement for the several battalions of his regiment, cantoned on the banks of the Douro, was promptly effected. The wind was favourable ; and as it blew half a gale from the time they cleared the Channel, the transports anchored in the Tagus on the sixth evening from that on which they had lost sight of the chalk-cliffs of Britain.

A new scene had opened on O'Connor. The bustle of an approaching campaign occupied his

thoughts ; and, in martial preparation, he strove to forget the disappointment his rejection by Mary Howard had occasioned.

Nothing could equal the enthusiastic ardour with which the British soldiery looked forward to the recommencement of active operations ; nothing could surpass their high discipline ; and the organization of the army was complete. During the period they had remained in winter cantonments, every arm of the force had been perfected, and the *matériel* of the English army was magnificent. Powerful reinforcements, including the life and horse guards, had joined ; and Lord Wellington crossed the Douro with nineteen regiments of cavalry, splendidly equipped and mounted. The infantry, recruited from the corps at home and volunteers from the militias, were vigorous and effective ; the artillery was powerful and complete in every requisite for the field ; while an experienced commissariat and well-regulated means of transport, facilitated the operations of the most perfect and servicable force with

which, since the days of Marlborough, a British general had opened a campaign.

Never did a commander take the field under more glorious auspices. Supported by numerous bodies of native troops, and assisted by the most daring of the guerilla leaders, Wellington broke up from his cantonments with summer before him, and a rich and luxurious country through which to direct his line of march. His troops were flushed with victory—his opponents depressed from constant discomfiture. The opening movements indicated this feeling strongly. The French were already retrograding; the British preparing to advance. No wonder then the brilliant hopes of that splendid army were fully realized; and the glorious career of English conquest almost continued without a check, until the fields of France saw its banners float in victory; and the last struggles at Ortez and Toulouse attest the invincibility of Wellington!

While the British were preparing to march, the army of the centre, under Joseph Bonaparte,

followed by those of "the South," and "Portugal," retired slowly on the Ebro. As they were not pressed by the British light troops, the French corps moved leisurely along their rout, accompanied by an immense train of equipages and baggage. The appearance of the whole army was picturesque and imposing, from the gaiety of its equipment and the variety of its costume. Excepting the infantry of the line and the light battalions, few of the French regiments were similarly dressed. The horse artillery wore uniforms of light blue, braided with black lace; the heavy cavalry were arrayed in green coats, with brass helmets. The chasseurs and hussars, mounted on slight but active horses, were variously and showily equipped. The gendarmerie à cheval—a picked body, chosen from the cavalry in general, had long blue frocks, with buff belts and cocked hats—while the *élite* of the dragoon regiments, selected for their superior size and height, wore bearskin caps, and presented a fierce and martial appearance.

The regiments of the line had each their grenadier and voltigeur company; and even the light corps were provided with a company of the former. The appearance of the whole force was soldierly and effective—the cavalry was indeed superb—the artillery excellent, their caissons, guns, and harness in excellent order, and the horses in the highest condition.

Though the rival armies were in discipline and efficiency to all appearance perfect, a practised soldier would remark a striking dissimilarity in the *matériel* of their respective equipment. Every thing attached to the British was simple, compact, and limited as far as its being serviceable would admit; while the French corps was encumbered in its march with useless equipages, and burdened with accumulated plunder. That portion of the Spanish noblesse which had acknowledged the usurper now accompanied his retreat—state functionaries in court dresses and embroidery mingled with the troops—calashes with wives and mistresses moved between brigades of guns—

whilè nuns from Castile, and ladies from Andalusia, mounted on horseback and attired *en militaire*, deserted convent and castle, to follow the fortunes of some "bold dragoon." Never was an army, save that of Moscow, so overloaded with spoil and baggage, as that of Joseph Bonaparte with which he retired upon Vittoria.

Though the circumstance had neither escaped the observation or animadversion of its officers, the retreating columns as yet had experienced but little difficulty in transporting the unwieldy ambulances which contained more spoil than trophies. Looking upon Spain as a hostile country, the means necessary to forward their convoys were unscrupulously seized, and every horse and mule was considered to be the property of the finder. The roads were good—the retreat unmolested. Even on the 16th no enemy had appeared; and to all appearance the allies remained quietly in their cantonments. The apathy of the English general was extraordinary, and

many a prisoner was tauntingly asked by his French escort, “was Lord Wellington asleep?”

Nothing, indeed, could equal the astonishment of the usurper, when informed on the evening of the 18th, that the allies were in considerable force on the left bank of the Ebro! All the French arrangements were overthrown, and an instant night-march was rendered unavoidable. The drums beat to arms—the baggage was hastily put in motion—and the whole army which had been collected in Pancorbo, or bivouacked in its immediate vicinity, defiled towards the city of Vittoria.

The point on which the corps of Joseph Bonaparte had concentrated, is situated on the great road leading from Burgos to Bayonne. It is defended by a strong fort placed on a commanding eminence, which the French occupied with a regiment. A narrow valley, surrounded by rocky heights and crossed by a mountain torrent, affords barely space for the road which traverses it; and the scenery was singularly contrasted with the rich country the retreating army had just

abandoned, for nothing could be more savage, rugged, and uncultivated.

Vittoria, on which the French fell back, is in picturesque situation second to no city in Spain. Placed on a gentle eminence, a level champaign country immediately surrounds it, encircled in the distance by a mountain ridge. On the north-west, the Zadorra is crossed by several bridges; while on the other side, a bold and commanding chain of heights overhangs the road leading to Pampeluna. Across the valley, which there becomes gradually enlarged, are the villages of Gamarra Major and Abechaca, while the beautiful river ranges over a fine and cultivated scene, giving to the environs of Vittoria a rich yet romantic character.

There, after a harassing march of thirty miles, the army of the South halted on the evening of the 19th. A more confused and crowded place could not be imagined, and it displayed a strange medley of magnificence and discomfort. Earlier in the evening, the court of Joseph, his staff and

guards, the head quarters of "the centre," convoys and equipages, cavalry and artillery occupied the buildings, and crowded the streets; while every hour increased the confusion, as portions of the executive and military departments flocked in, and formed an embarrassing addition to an unmanageable mass of soldiers and civilians, already far too numerous to find accommodation in a town unequal to shelter half that number which occupied it now.

But yet a stranger scene was enacting at Vittoria. While the city was brilliantly illuminated in honour of the visit of the king, and a gayer sight could not be fancied than its sparkling interior presented, beyond the walls an army was taking its position, and a multitude of wretched serfs were employed at the point of the bayonet, in throwing up field defences, and assisting those who ruled them with an iron hand, to place their guns in battery, and make the other military dispositions to repel the very force that had come for their deliverance.

OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN—AFFAIR OF
ST. MILLAN—THE BIVOUAC.

Perish the man whose mind is backward now!

KING HENRY V.

CHAPTER III.

OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN—AFFAIR OF
ST. MILLAN—THE BIVOUAC.

No movement of the Peninsular campaign brings to the retired soldier more interesting reminiscences, than the rapid advance of the British army, from the time it crossed the Douro on the 1st of June until it halted on the evening of the 19th on the banks of the Bayas.

By the able manœuvring of Lord Wellington, Joseph Bonaparte had been obliged to abandon his line of communication with the capital, and fall back on Burgos to concentrate. Contrary to the expectation of the French their retreat

was unmolested; and it was considered very doubtful whether the English commander would break up from his cantonments and become assailant.

But they mistook the man when they imagined that Wellington intended to remain inactive. With characteristic celerity his whole army was put in motion, and the Douro, the Carrion, and the Pisuerga were crossed successively. A demonstration was made on Burgos, and the French were obliged to retire from the place and blow up its defences. Unopposed, the fiery chief reached the valley of the Ebro—and by a rout considered by Napoleon's officers impracticable for the movement of an army, pressing forward without delay, he crossed the bridges of the river and established himself on the left bank.

It can hardly be imagined what additional interest this operation, brilliant equally in its execution and results, acquired from the nature of the country across which the line of march passed. The scenery was beautiful and diversified, displaying a singular combination of roman-

tic wildness with exquisite fertility. One while, the columns moved through luxurious valleys intersprinkled with hamlets, vineyards, and flower-gardens; at another, they struggled up mountain ridges, or pressed through Alpine passes overhung with toppling cliffs, making it almost difficult to decide whether the rugged chasm which they traversed had been rifted from the hill-side by an earthquake, or scarped by the hand of man. If the eye turned downwards, there lay sparkling rivers and sunny dells; above, rose naked rocks and splintered precipices; while moving masses of glittering soldiery, now lost, now seen, amid the windings of the rout, gave a panoramic character to the whole, that never will fade from the memory of him who saw it.

Some sharp fighting occurred on the 18th, between the light troops of the rival armies; and two retreating brigades of the enemy were overtaken and brought to action by the rifles and 52d. The affair terminated on the French part, in the loss of much baggage and some three hun-

dred prisoners, although Jourdan, by attacking the British left at Osma, thought to impede the advance of the allies, and afford sufficient time for his own column retiring from Frias to rejoin the main body without loss.

There is nothing more exciting in warfare, than when a small portion of an army operates in the presence of the whole. The feeling that their comrades' eyes are turned on them, stimulates the combatants; while an intense anxiety for the success of their brethren in arms, animates the coldest of the lookers on. This was strongly experienced during the short but decisive struggle on the heights of St. Millan. Although the ground was most unfavourable for an assault, nothing could surpass the splendid style in which the light brigade attacked the enemy. The road by which it was necessary to advance, was rugged, steep, and narrow, overhung with crags and underwood, while a mountain-stream protected the French front, and some straggling houses increased the difficulty of advancing, by affording

cover to the voltigeurs who had formed behind them. After a sharp fusilade the enemy gave ground, and the light brigade was pressing forward, when, suddenly, a fresh column debouched from a ravine, and appeared upon the flank of the assailants. Both rushed on to gain the crest of the hill—and both reached the plateau together. The 52d, bringing their left flank forward in a run, faced round and charged with the bayonet. The conflict was momentary, the French broke, threw away their knapsacks, and fled for the adjoining high grounds; while a wild cheer from the supporting regiment—near enough to witness but not assist in the defeat—bore a soldier's tribute to the gallantry of their companions.

It was the first time that many of the young men who accompanied O'Connor from England had been "under fire," and seen hostile shots exchanged; and as the casualties had been trifling, there was no drawback to damp the *éclat* of a successful affair. Never, indeed, did a young soldier commence a campaign, whose "starry

influences" were more auspicious. The weather was fine—the country through which the line of march lay, rich and picturesque—the troops moved as men move to victory—while a friendly population every where hailed the approach of their deliverers. The peasantry received them with "*vivas*"—the Spanish girl met them with her tambarine and castanets—while the nuns, leaving relic and rosary to gaze upon the glittering bands as they defiled in quick succession, showered rose-leaves from the convent grates; or, if the building was too distant from the line of march, waved, with their white veils, a welcome to the conquerors.

The spot where the rifles bivouacked after the affair of Saint Millan was a wild and romantic valley upon the bank of a bright and rapid stream. The French had occupied it the preceding evening, and, with the variableness of war, the victors established themselves in the same cantonment that but a few hours before had been tenanted by the vanquished. It is marvellous

with what celerity soldiers arrange their resting-places. Within an hour from the time the advance halted, the mules were up, the baggage unpacked, fires lighted, and supper in full preparation. No delay impeded these important operations; the whole of the martial community were actively employed—one carried wood—another watched the camp kettle; this man mended his shoe—that one cleaned his musket; all were busy—while the light and careless jest, which occasionally elicited a roar of laughter, might have been expected rather from a peaceful merry-making, than from men after a sharp encounter, and preparing for a more decisive conflict on to-morrow.

In the ruined shell of a goatherd's hovel, a party of some seven or eight of the rifles had cantoned themselves for the night. Their beds were laid around the walls, a tablecloth was spread in the centre of the floor, each quickly produced the necessary implements for attacking the contents of the camp kettle; and as all had

contributed to the *cuisine*, the mess presented a strange combination of different viands, united in one general *mélange*. Men engaged warmly in the morning with an enemy are not fastidious in gastronomy in the evening; and an olio that would have poisoned an alderman, comprising salt and fresh beef, fowls, rice, vegetables and a hare, was pronounced exquisite. Each from the grand depot selected the food his heart loved; while a large skin-bottle of country wine, and divers flasks and canteens filled with rum and brandy, indicated that due precautions had been taken to ensure a merry night. When the meal ended, the kettle and its contents passed to the uses of the domestics, who had formed a rude bivouac beneath a spreading sycamore.

“Fill, lads—fill a high bumper,” said the senior officer of the group who tenanted the ruins of the goatherd’s hut. “Here’s green tufts and short barrels. I never was prouder of my brave lights than to-day; our success was decisive, and our casualties but few.”

“Poor Robinson!—His was a short career. He fell at the very moment that victory was certain.”

“Then,” said Major O’Connor, “he fell where the brave should. Come, George—thou hast for the first time heard a bullet hiss! What think you of a smart affair like that of Saint Millan?”

“Think!” replied the enthusiastic boy, for the speaker had scarcely reached sixteen, “I think that the only thing on earth worth living for, is such a scene as the one I shared in this morning.”

“Right, boy”—and O’Connor sighed heavily. “What are the tamer occupations of peaceful life, compared with the brave and brief career the soldier runs? That wild hurra that echoed through the mountain passes, when the French were driven from the heights—what mortal sounds could thrill the heart as they did? Ay, George, let sluggard spirits dream their life away, the brave alone feel that rapturous excitement which makes existence tolerable.”

O'Brien stole a side glance at the speaker; the eye was fired—the cup was at his lips—but yet, even in that maddening hour of high excitement after victory, the worm was gnawing a breast that seemed steeled to softer influences

“How delightful,” said another of the neophytes, who had landed but a few days before from England, “is this wild mode of life! Have we not all that man can desire? and a newness and uncertainty that make it doubly agreeable? Here we are cantoned for the night, and heaven alone can tell where we shall bivouac to-morrow.”

“Yes, Aylmer,” replied O'Brien; “a summer campaign is not objectionable; but O'Connor could probably inform you that there are times when a bivouac is not so agreeable. Do you remember when we were hutted at Alcanza?”

The major smiled.

“Yes, Denis; our accommodations were not just so comfortable.”

“I shall never forget the last night we occupied that infernal outpost. It was the morning after Busaco, when Massena, repulsed in every

attempt to force our mountain position, endeavoured to turn it by marching in the direction of the road to Oporto. Of course a correspondent movement on our part was indispensable ; and on the 29th of September we retreated upon the lines of Torres Vedras. We reached our intrenchments with little molestation, and there occupied the cantonments, where we were afterwards obliged to winter.

“ From the perfect state of the lines, an assault upon them was utterly hopeless ; and after a careful *reconnaissance*, Junot abandoned all idea of forcing the defences, and changed his operations to a blockade. Nothing could exceed the privations which the French soldiers endured in their miserable cantonments. With scarcely any shelter from the inclemency of winter weather—food in scanty supplies, and of the most wretched description imaginable—disease gaining ground—desertions every day more numerous—while the mortality among the horses was tremendous, as from a scarcity of forage the poor animals were

obliged to feed on rotten straw and vine-twigs. Our situation was better than that of the enemy, particularly in being tolerably supplied with corn and provisions; but as to the huts, I suspect both parties were pretty nearly on a par. We certainly, as they say in Ireland, "kept open house," for the wind and rain entered at every corner.

"Our habitation was constructed of sods, old boards, and branches, and thatched with heather. Straw was too scarce to be obtained; and the heath we substituted for it, whenever the rain fell heavily, was pervious every where. The inside of our wigwam, although the dimensions were limited, contained seven officers and a brace of greyhounds; while the beds, comprising stretchers, mattresses, a bear-skin, and two or three trusses of straw, were arranged round the walls, leaving a space in the centre for the rude apology which a shattered door formed for a table. When the night was wet, it was amusing to see the different expedients that each man resorted to, and the

ingenious contrivances devised to obtain shelter from the rain. Some extended their blankets upon upright sticks, and stowed themselves beneath it; others put their faith in the tablecloth as a canopy. But these contrivances, however, were generally found wanting; when fully saturated, the cloths brought down the sticks, and the sleeper had the whole collection of water in one plump; and instead of receiving it by the drop, he got it by the gallon. Llewellyn, the little Welshman who was killed at Badajos, was the most comical figure upon earth, as he sate on a truss of straw in the corner, under a tattered umbrella—while O'Shaughnessy and Daly, wrapped in their cloaks, remained all night stoutly at the table, discussing brandy punch, and playing "spoiled five," from a pack of cards reduced to twenty-seven, and whose backs, from divers stains, were to both just as familiar as their faces were. But the last night topped all. The roof, surcharged with moisture, became too weighty for its frail supports, and down it came upon the

unhappy community; and men and dogs—sleepers and card-players—were all involved in one general ruin. Poor Daly—a six-pound shot closed his account at Salamanca—roared lustily for help. O’Shaughnessy in vain struggled to liberate himself from a ton of wet heather. The little Welshman was all but smothered under his own umbrella; while the dogs, believing themselves assaulted, bit the legs of the man next the peg they were secured to. Gradually, however, all got disentangled from the wreck, and obtained a lodging from their comrades, who, like ourselves, were hutted at this execrable outpost.”

“Ah!” said O’Connor, “that is not the kind of concern that Edwards would fancy. His bivouac must be a *cottage ornée*, with a murmuring rivulet and a vineyard in full bearing. The casements should be trellised with ever-blowing roses, while grapes and oranges ripened against the wall, and he had merely to open the window to gather a dessert.”

There was a laugh at the romantic picture the

young soldier had drawn of campaigning—the goatskin bottle was nearly finished—one after another the revellers stretched themselves on their humble resting-places—in half an hour the bivouac was silent as a peaceful hamlet, and its occupants slept calmly, as if no struggle had occurred that day, and no battle was expected on the morrow.

VITTORIA.

MESSENGER. The English are embattled, you French peers.

CONSTABLE. To horse, you gallant soldiers! straight to
horse!

KING HENRY V.

Stroke and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant city wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes.

SIEGE OF CORINTH.

CHAPTER IV.

VITTORIA.

SOME rain had fallen during the night, but a lovelier morning than the 21st of June never broke. The sun rose brilliantly, and the blue sky was cloudless. On either side all was prepared for a conflict—a battle was inevitable—the English commander being resolved to offer, and the French marshal to accept the combat.

The enemy's position was well chosen, but it was rather too extended—on one side it rested on the heights of La Puebla, and on the other occupied the ridge above Gamarra Major. The French order of battle embraced two lines—the

armies of Portugal and the South were in the first, and the cavalry and army of the centre were placed in the second in reserve. The entire, with the exception of a small corps, were drawn out in front of Vittoria, and formed on the left bank of the Zadorra, which sweeping round the whole position rendered it truly formidable.

While the front was defended by the river, the great roads to Bayonne and Pampeluna, in the event of any disaster, offered every facility for retreating. In many respects the French position at Vittoria was excellent; the communications were direct, and not liable to obstruction; the artillery were in battery, and a large proportion covered by a field-work in the weakest point (the centre), near the village of Gomecha; while the plains around Vittoria offered every advantage for the operations of cavalry; and that arm of Joseph's concentrated force was both numerous and well appointed.

The only means of attack upon the centre of

the French position, was by crossing the bridges of the Zadorra, and they were in every place commanded by the guns, and open to a charge of cavalry. Every thing that could cover an enemy's advance had been carefully removed, and few beside British soldiers would have dared to bring on an action, where so many difficulties were to be encountered in the very opening of the contest.

Soon after the action commenced, Joseph placed himself upon a rising ground that overlooked his right and centre. His own guard were formed in his rear, and a numerous and splendid staff surrounded him. Wellington had chosen an eminence commanding the right bank of the Zadorra, and directly in front of the village of Arinez. Dressed in a short gray coat closely buttoned, his Spanish sash and plumed hat alone marked his rank. He remained for a long time on foot; and while the contest on the heights of Puebla continued doubtful, his glass was turned almost exclusively upon that point, as he watched the progress of the contest with the same coolness

with which he would have regarded the manœuvres of a review.

There never was during the Peninsular campaigns a battle that required nicer combinations and a more correct calculation in time and movements than that of Vittoria. It was impossible to bring up to the immediate proximity for attack every portion of his numerous army, and hence many of Wellington's brigades had bivouacked at a considerable distance from the Zadorra. Part of the country before Vittoria was difficult and rocky; hamlets, enclosures, and ravines, separating the columns from each other. Some of them were obliged to move by narrow and broken roads, and arrangements, perfect in themselves, were liable to embarrassment from numerous contingencies. But the genius that could plan these extended operations, could also remedy fortuitous events, if such occurred.

The attack commenced by Hill's division moving soon after daylight by the Miranda road, and

the detaching of Morilla's Spanish corps to carry the heights of La Puebla, and drive in the left flank of the enemy. The task was a difficult one. The ground rose abruptly from the valley, and towering to a considerable height, presented a sheer ascent that at first sight appeared almost impracticable. The Spaniards, with great difficulty, although unopposed, reached the summit; and there among rocks and broken ground became sharply engaged with the French left. Unable however to force the enemy from the heights, Sir Rowland detached a British brigade to Morilla's assistance, while, alarmed for the safety of his flank, Jourdan detached troops from his centre to support it. A fierce and protracted combat ensued, and Colonel Cadogan fell at the head of his brigade. Gradually and steadily the British gained ground; and while the eyes of both armies were turned upon the combatants, and the possession of the heights seemed doubtful, the eagle glance of Wellington discovered the forward movement of the Highland tartans, and he announced to his staff that La Puebla was his own.

To support the attack upon the heights, O'Callaghan's brigade of the second division crossed the river and assaulted Sabijana de Alava. Notwithstanding a sharp resistance the place was carried most gallantly; but as the village was in advance, the French made repeated efforts to repossess it. The British, however, held it bravely, until the centre and left having closed up enabled the English general to make a decisive movement of the whole line.

Meanwhile the light divisions had left the road, and formed in close columns behind rocks and broken ground at some distance from the river. The hussar brigade remained dismounted on the left; while the fourth division deployed to the right, and took its position for attack. The heavy cavalry were in reserve to support the centre, should support be required before the third and seventh came up and occupied ground on the left flank. During this time the first and fifth divisions, a Spanish and Portuguese corps, and a strong body of dragoons,

were marched from Murgua, to place themselves on the road to Saint Sebastian, and there cut off the enemy's retreat.

While O'Callaghan's brigade was repeatedly attacked in Sabijana de Alava, and some anxiety was caused from the delay of the centre and their exposed position, the opening of Sir Thomas Graham's cannonade announced that the battle had commenced on the left. Presently Lord Dalhousie notified his arrival at Mendonza with the third and seventh divisions, and Lord Wellington ordered a general attack on the whole of the French position.

The light division moved under cover of a thicket and placed itself opposite the enemy's right centre, about two hundred paces from the bridge of Villoses. On the arrival of Lord Dalhousie the signal was given to advance; and at the moment a Spaniard announced that one of the bridges had been left undefended. The mistake was quickly seized upon. A brigade, led by the first rifles, crossed it in a run, and without

loss established itself in a deep ravine, where it was protected from the cannonade.

Nothing could be more beautiful than the operations which followed. The light division carried the bridge of Nanclaus, and the fourth that of Tres Puentes—the divisions of Picton and Dalhousie followed, and the battle became general. The passage of the river—the movement of glittering masses from right to left far as the eye could range—the deafening roar of cannon—the sustained fusilade of the infantry—all was grand and imposing—while the English cavalry displayed in glorious sunshine, and formed in line to support the columns, completed a spectacle, that to a military observer would be unequalled.

Although perfect success had attended the combined movements of the different brigades, the village of Arincz resisted every attack, and even the 88th were repulsed in a daring attempt to storm it. This, probably, was the doubtful struggle of the day, and the French fought desperately.

Their artillery played at point-blank distance—the village was filled with infantry—the whole place was shrouded in smoke, while the hissing of shot and bursting of shells added to the terrors of the scene.

But this was but a momentary check. Wellington in person directed a fresh assault—the 45th and 74th were led forward, and Arinez carried with the bayonet.

While the battle was raging in the front, the flank movement on Gamarra Major and Abechuco was being executed by the first and fifth divisions. The bridges in front of these villages had been fortified and were obstinately retained; but when the centre was forced at Vittoria, their defenders gave way, and Lord Lynedoch occupied them.

The whole of the enemy's first line were now driven back—but they retired in perfect order, and re-forming close to Vittoria, presented an imposing front protected by nearly one hundred pieces of artillery. A tremendous fire checked

the advance of the left centre, and the storm of the guns on both sides raged with unabated fury for an hour. Vittoria, although so near the combatants, was hidden from view by the dense smoke, while volley after volley from the French infantry, thinned though it could not shake Picton's "fighting third." But it was a desperate and final effort. The allies were advancing in beautiful order, and confusion was visible in the enemy's ranks, as their left attempted to retire by *échelons* of divisions, a movement badly executed. Presently the cannon were abandoned—and the whole mass of troops commenced retreating by the road to Pampeluna. The sun was setting, and his last rays fell upon a magnificent spectacle—the red masses of infantry were seen advancing steadily across the plain—the horse artillery at a gallop to the front, to open its fire on the fugitives—the hussar brigade were charging by the Camino Real—while the second division, having overcome every obstacle and driven the enemy from its front, was extending over the

heights upon the right in line, its arms and appointments flashing gloriously in the fading sunshine of “departing day.”

Never had an action been more general, nor the attacks in every part of an extended position, more simultaneous and successful. In the line of operations six bridges over the Zadorra, were crossed or stormed. That on the road to Burges enabled Lord Hill to pass; the fourth division crossed that of Nanclaus; the light, at Tres Puentes; Picton and Dalhousie passed the river lower down; while Lord Lynedoch carried Abechuco and Gamarra Major, though both were strongly fortified and both obstinately defended.

From a hillock on the other side of Vittoria Wellington viewed the retreating enemy and urged forward his own troops in pursuit. What a sight to meet a conqueror's eye! Beneath him the valley was covered for a mile with straggling fugitives—for the French army had totally lost its formation, and neither attempted to rally even or check the pursuit of the British. The horse

artillery were already posted on an adjacent height, showering upon the crowd below them a storm of shot and shells—the light troops and cavalry still pressed forward—while around, the entire *matériel* of an army was scattered as it had been left, and the whole of a magnificent park, with the exception of a few guns, abandoned to the victors. Night alone closed the pursuit — and favoured by the broken ground the shattered battalions of the usurper effected their escape. The *déroute* was perfect—and two leagues from the town the fiery chief reluctantly ceased to follow, as darkness and previous fatigue rendered further operations impossible. The advance bivouacked on the ground where they halted; and Wellington returning slowly to Vittoria, entered it at nine at night.

Never had defeat been more decisive than that which the pseudo king sustained. An army, complete in every arm, was totally dispersed; and though the prisoners bore but a small proportion to the killed and wounded, that could be ascribed

alone to the rapidity with which the French retired, abandoning every thing that could impede their flight, and favoured by a rugged surface, broken roads, and seasonable darkness. Through streets thronged by a victorious soldiery and choked with captured equipages, the English commander and his weary staff rode slowly to their quarters; and the same city that, but two nights since, had illuminated in honour of the King of Spain, was blazing now to welcome the conqueror of the usurper.

On the morning of the 22d, the field of battle and the roads for some miles in the rear exhibited an appearance it seldom falls within human power to witness. There, lay the wreck of of a mighty army; while plunder accumulated during the French successes, and wrung from every part of Spain with unsparing rapacity, was recklessly abandoned to any who chose to seize it. Cannon and caissons, carriages and tumbrels, waggons of every description were overturned or deserted, and a stranger *mélange* could

not be imagined, than these enormous convoys presented to the eye. Here was the personal baggage of a king—there the scenery and decorations of a theatre. Munitions of war were mixed with articles of *virtu*; and with scattered arms and packs, silks, embroidery, plate, and jewels, mingled in wild disorder. One waggon was loaded with money—the next with cartridges; and wounded soldiers, deserted women, and children of every age, every where implored assistance or protection. Here a lady was overtaken in her carriage—in the next calash, was an actress or *fille-de-chambre*, while droves of oxen were roaming over the plain, intermingled with an endless quantity of sheep and goats, mules and horses, asses and milch cows.

That much valuable plunder came into the hands of the soldiery is certain; but the better portion fell to the peasantry and camp followers. Two valuable captures were secured—a full military chest, and the baton of Marshal Jourdan.

Were not the indiscriminating system of spo-

liation adopted by the French armies recollected, the enormous collection of plunder abandoned at Vittoria would appear incredible. From the highest to the lowest, all were bearing off some valuables from the country they had overrun. Even the king himself had not proved an exception ; for, rolled in the imperials of his own carriage, some of the finest pictures from the royal galleries were discovered. To facilitate their transport they had been removed from their frames, and were destined by the usurper to add to the unrivalled collection, that, by similar means, had been abstracted from the continent to centre in the Louvre. Wellington, however, interrupted the Spanish paintings in their transit, and the formality of a restoration.

MOUNTAIN COMBAT—FRENCH BIVOUAC—
MILITARY REMINISCENCES.

KING RICHARD.—Up with my tent : here will I lie to-
night ;
But where to-morrow ?—Well, all's one
for that.

SHAKSPEARE.

CHAPTER V.

MOUNTAIN COMBAT—FRENCH BIVOUAC—
MILITARY REMINISCENCES.

AFTER the defeat of Joseph Bonaparte a brilliant continuation of successes attended the British arms. Passages and Paucorbo were taken, Pampeluna strictly blockaded, and the siege of Saint Sebastian commenced. Soult, after his appointment to the command, with a recruited army, endeavoured to succour these fortresses. A series of sanguinary combats in the Pyrennes terminated in his total discomfiture; and, with severe loss on both sides, the French marshal was pursued across the frontier.

No operation could have been more brilliantly

executed than the mountain march of the light division in pursuit of Soult's rear-guard, after he had been defeated before Pampeluna, and driven back upon the passes of the Bidassoa, which, but a few days before, he had forced in the full confidence of succeeding. The French army suffered heavily in their obstinate and repeated efforts to arrest the advance of the English general. On the 31st of July it continued retreating, while five British divisions pressed the pursuit vigorously by Roncesvalles, Maya, and Donna Maria. Nothing could equal the distress of the enemy—they were completely worn down; and fatigued and disheartened as they were, the only wonder is that multitudes did not perish in the wild and rugged passes through which they were obliged to retire. Although rather in the rear of some of the columns, the British light brigades were ordered forward to overtake the enemy, and, wherever they came up, bring them to immediate action. At midnight the bivouacs were abandoned—the division marched—and

after nineteen hours' continued exertions, during which time a distance of nearly forty miles was traversed over Alpine heights and roads rugged and difficult beyond description, the enemy were overtaken and attacked. A short but smart affair ensued. To extricate the tail of the column and enable the wounded to get away, the French threw a portion of their rear-guard across the river. The rifles instantly attacked the reinforcement—a general fusilade commenced, and continued until night put an end to the affair, when the enemy retreated over the bridge of Yanzi, and the British pickets took possession of it. Both sides lost many men—and a large portion of French baggage fell into the hands of the pursuing force who had moved by St. Estevan.

That night the British light troops lay upon the ground; and next morning moved forward at daybreak. Debouching through the pass at Vera, the hill of Santa Barbara was crossed by the second brigade, while the rifles carried the heights of Echalar, which the French voltigeurs seemed

determined to maintain. As the mountain was obscured by a thick fog, the firing had a strange appearance to those who witnessed it from the valley, occasional flashes only being seen, while every shot was repeated by a hundred echoes. At twilight the enemy's light infantry were driven in; but long after darkness fell the report of musketry continued, until after a few spattering shots a deathlike silence succeeded, and told that the last of the enemy had followed their companions, and abandoned the heights to their assailants.

The next march was but a short one. The light division had been dreadfully harassed for the three preceding days, and it was necessary that time should be allowed for the leading columns to arrive. Fortunately a commissary got up to the front that evening; and better still, some private supplies arrived most seasonably. Soldiers speedily forget their past fatigues, and a very slight addition to their simple comforts dispels the recollection of the privations they have

recently endured. Such was the case upon the night of the 4th of August, when the rifles found themselves in the bivouac that the French rear-guard had just quitted. As this post commanded a bridge and ravine, it had been occupied during Soult's advance and retreat—and with more comfort than such rude halting-places generally exhibit, the interior of the wooden huts bore testimony to the taste and ingenuity of their late inhabitants.

The whole appearance of what had been a French bivouac for a fortnight was perfectly characteristic of that nation. Some clever contrivances for cooking, rude arm-racks, a rough table and benches to sit round it, still remained; while one gentleman had amused himself by drawing likenesses of British officers with a burnt stick, in which face figure and costume were most ridiculously caricatured—while another, a votary of the gentle art of poesy, had immortalized the charms of his mistress in doggrel verses scratched upon the boards with the point of a bayonet.

As the party was unusually large, and there was no chance of the baggage being up for a day or two, "a ready-furnished house," as an Irish servant termed the wooden hovel, was indeed a treasure. A fine clear stream was running before the hut; and, never imagining that they should be so unceremoniously ejected from their wooden habitation, the French had collected a quantity of billets for firing, and in their hurry off left a sheep and hare behind them. From the commissary a supply of brandy and biscuit had been obtained—and, at nightfall, a merrier party than that within the bivouac on the Torena never finished the contents of a canteen.

"Hurra! my boys!" exclaimed Major O'Shaughnessy, as he turned down a tin measure of brandy-and-water. "Here we are safe and sound—owners of a house fit for the summer residence of a London alderman—a deep drink for the taking—and such a dinner! Isn't Peter Bradly the devil at a stew? What a pity it was that his mother did not bind him to a

pastrycook! Well—it was decent after all in them French fellows to leave us meat, fire, and lodging. They do now and again exhibit some civility.”

“Yes, they show a marked distinction in their treatment of us and our good allies,” said O’Brien. “It was strongly instanced this morning. While we were forcing the road, a company had scaled the rocks above it to dislodge the tirailleurs who were firing at us from the heights. A poor fellow of mine, whose complexion is uncommonly swarthy, was wounded in the leg and fell. Unfortunately two or three retreating Frenchmen passed accidentally the spot where he was lying, and mistaking him for a Portuguese sharpshooter, stabbed him in several places, and flung him over the precipice; while they raised his comrade from the ground, placed a knapsack under his head, and gave him a drink from a leathern bottle of excellent tinta, which one of them had slung across his shoulder. On coming up we found the sufferer stretched upon the road,

and with difficulty he told us how he had been treated. We of course rendered him some assistance; but Sergeant Corrigan's remarks, as he was binding a cloth round his fractured leg, turned our condolence into laughter. "There now," he said, as he propped the wounded man against a rock—"there you are as snug as if you were in the barracks of Kilkenny. Didn't I always tell ye, that yalla face of yours would bring ye into trouble? No wonder the French mistook ye for a Portagee. It's yourself that could travel from Badajos to Giberralthur, and you're so like a native, the devil a dog would bark at you the whole way. If you get better, Barney dear, write for the priest's lines,* that you were bred and born at Shannon-bridge, and ye can paste it on the back of ye'r knapsack."

"An instance of French confidence occurred yesterday, after we debouched by Vera," observed one of the lieutenants. "I was with a section

* Lines, *Hibernice*, mean a certificate.

of the company in the advance of the rest, when on turning a sudden angle of the road, we perceived not twenty yards off, a wounded voltigeur extended on the ground, and a young comrade supporting him. The Frenchman never attempted to retreat, but smiled when we came up as if he had been expecting us. ‘Good morning,’ he said, ‘I have been waiting for you, gentlemen. My poor friend’s leg is broken by a shot, and I could not leave him till you arrived, lest some of these Portuguese brigands should murder him. Pierre,’ he continued, as he addressed his companion—‘here are the brave English, and you will be taken care of. I will leave you a flask of water, and you will soon be succoured by our noble enemy. Gentlemen, will you honour me by emptying this canteen. You will find it excellent, for I took it from a portly friar two days ago.’ There was no need to repeat the invitation. I set the example, the canteen passed from mouth to mouth, and the monk’s brandy vanished. The conscript—for he had not joined

above a month—replenished the flask with water from a spring just by. He placed it in his comrade's hand, bade him an affectionate farewell, bowed gracefully to us, threw his musket over his shoulder, and trotted off to join his regiment, which he pointed out upon a distant height. He seemed never for a moment to contemplate the possibility of our sending him in durance to the rear; and there were about him such kindness and confidence, that on our part no one ever dreamed of detaining him."

— "There never was, and probably never will be," said Captain Mornington, "so powerful an example of the influence of national confidence and courtesy, remaining unimpaired even during the continuance of a ferocious engagement, as that which Talavera exhibits. No fighting could be more desperate than that which marked the meeting of the French and English. Victor, considering the heights occupied by Hill's division the key of the position, concluded, that if he could carry them, the remainder of the ground

would then become untenable. To effect this, he resorted to a night attack. Lapisse made a feint upon the centre, while Ruffin and Vilatte ascended the heights, and for a short time had them in their possession—but Hill recovered them with the bayonet, and repulsed another furious effort made at midnight. Even though the French, by pretending they were Spaniards and deserters, penetrated the British line, they were driven back with frightful slaughter; and so desperately was this night-fighting carried on, that the assailants and the assailed frequently were engaged in a *mêlée* so close, that the men fought with clubbed muskets. All morning the battle raged, and the day assault was as unsuccessful as the night attack had proved. Both armies had lain upon the ground, but none had slept—the trooper with his horse's bridle round his arm—the soldier in momentary expectation of a fresh attempt, listened in every noise for the enemy's approach. No wonder then that a sultry day in July found both sides overcome with heat and hunger—and by a sort of common consent, long before noon,

hostilities ceased, and the French cooked their dinners, while the English had wine and bread served out. Then it was, that a curious scene ensued. A small stream, tributary to the Tagus, flowed through a part of the battle-ground, and separated the combatants. During the pause that the heat of the weather and the weariness of the troops produced, both armies went to the banks of the rivulet for water. The men approached each other fearlessly, threw down their caps and muskets, chatted to each other like old acquaintances, and exchanged their brandy-flasks and wine-skins. All asperity of feeling seemed forgotten. To a stranger they would appear more like an allied force, than men hot from a ferocious conflict, and only gathering strength and energy to recommence it anew. But a still nobler rivalry for the time existed—the interval was employed in carrying off the wounded, who lay intermixed upon the hard-contested field; and, to the honour of both be it told, each endeavoured to extricate the common sufferers, and remove their unfortunate friends and enemies without distinc-

tion. Suddenly—the bugles sounded—the drums beat to arms—many of the rival soldiery shook hands and parted with expressions of mutual esteem, and in ten minutes after they were again at the bayonet's point.”

“How miserably a portion of the Spaniards behaved !”

“Yes,” said O'Connor, “only for their cowardice the British would not have suffered so dreadfully as they did. But what could be expected from troops led by such miserable officers, and commanded by an imbecile old man like Cuesta? I saw him the day before the battle commenced. He was mounting his horse to look at some brigades of ours ; two grenadiers lifted him bodily to the saddle, while an aide-de-camp passed his legs across the horse's croup, and an orderly fixed his foot within the stirrup ! The rosary were better fitted for one of his infirmities than the baton of command. When he was with great difficulty dismounted from his charger's back, they transferred him into a lum-

bering coach drawn by half a score of mules, and thus he proceeded in state to his headquarters.”

“ Pray did not the old boy decimate the run-aways? ” inquired a lieutenant.

“ No—Lord Wellington interfered, and saved the greater portion of the scoundrels. The lots were drawn—officers and men prepared for immediate execution—when, at the request of the English commander, the condemned were decimated anew, and thus nine out of every ten escaped, and only five officers and thirty men suffered.”

“ Do you recollect the circumstances that marked the close of Talavera, O’Connor? ”

“ Alas! what a terrible accompaniment to the after horrors of a battle field! From the heat of the weather the fallen leaves were parched like tinder, and the grass was rank and dry. Near the end of the engagement both were ignited by the blaze of some cartridge-papers, and the whole surface of the ground was pre-

sently covered with a sheet of fire. Those of the disabled who lay on the outskirts of the field, managed to crawl away, or were carried off by their more fortunate companions who had escaped unhurt; but, unhappily, many gallant sufferers, with ‘medicable wounds,’ perished in the flames before it was possible to extricate them. I walked over the ground next morning, and, as if to exhibit violent death in all its horrifying variety, the writhed and distorted features of the blackened corpses I passed by, showed in what intolerable agony they had breathed their last!”

“And how did the battle terminate?” inquired one of the lads.

“Aubrey can best answer you,” replied O’Connor; “for he was then in the 48th, and saw the last struggle the French made.”

“It was a beautiful movement,” said the officer to whom the major had referred. “The enemy had been repulsed and followed. The guards, carried onwards by victorious excitement, advanced too far, and found themselves in turn

assailed by the French reserve, and mowed down by an overwhelming fire. They fell back; but as whole sections were swept away, their ranks became disordered, and nothing but their stubborn gallantry prevented a total *déroute*. Their situation was most critical. Had the French cavalry charged home, nothing could have saved them. Lord Wellington saw the danger, and speedily despatched support. A brigade of horse were ordered up, and our regiment moved from the height we occupied to assist our hard-pressed comrades. We came on at double quick, and formed in the rear by companies, and through the intervals in our line, the broken ranks of the guards retreated. A close and well-directed volley from us arrested the progress of the victorious French, while with amazing celerity and coolness, the guards rallied and re-formed; and in a few minutes advanced in turn to support us. As they came on, the men gave a loud huzza. An Irish regiment to the right answered it with a thrilling cheer. It was taken up from regiment

to regiment, and passed along the English line ; and that wild shout told the advancing enemy that British valour was indomitable. The leading files of the French halted—turned—fell back—and never made another effort. Both armies remained upon the ground ; but during the night Victor decamped, and left victory and an undisputed field to his conqueror.”

“ Gentlemen,” said O’Connor, “ the night wears fast. Methinks we have had enough of martial reminiscences. Come, fill ; and let us change war for a softer theme. I’ll give you a toast—‘ Lovely woman ! ’—And I propose, as a suitable accompaniment, that O’Shaughnessy shall favour us with the true detail of one of his amatory adventures.”

“ Bravo—nothing can be more apposite to the toast”—responded Captain O’Brien. “ Come, Terence, my jewel ; forget your national bashfulness for half an hour, and give us the interesting particulars of the first of one of your numerous attempts at matrimony.”

“Why then, faith,” replied the gallant major, “my opening effort to become a Benedict was nearly as big a blunder as it well could be. Here, hand me that leathern conveniency”—and he pointed to a wine-skin, “though upon my conscience, those young scamps have lessened its contents amazingly. Heigh-ho! It was a queer business, and I will make the story as short as I can.”

Major O’Shaughnessy having fortified himself with a stoup of tinta, thus commenced the affecting narrative of his first disappointment in love.



CHAPTER VI.

CONFESSIONS OF A GENTLEMAN WHO
WOULD HAVE MARRIED IF HE COULD.

FIRST CONFESSION.

YES—here I am, Terence O'Shaughnessy, an honest major of foot, five feet eleven and a half, and forty-one, if I only live till Michaelmas. Kicked upon the world before the down had blackened on my chin, fortune and I have been wrestling from the cradle, and yet I had little to tempt the jade's malevolence. The youngest son of an excellent gentleman, who, with an ill-paid rental of twelve hundred pounds, kept his wife in Bath, and his hounds in Tipperary, my patrimony would have scarcely purchased tools for a high-

wayman, when in my tenth year my father's sister sent for me to Roundwood; for hearing that I was regularly going to the devil, she had determined to redeem me if she could.

My aunt Honor was the widow of a captain of dragoons, who got his quietus in the Low Countries some years before I saw the light. His relict had in compliment to the memory of her departed lord eschewed matrimony, and like a Christian woman, devoted her few and evil days to cards and religion. She was a true specimen of an Irish dowager—her means were small, her temper short—she was stiff as a ramrod, and proud as a field-marshal. To her my education and future settlement in life were entirely confided, as one brief month deprived me of both parents. My mother died in a state of insolvency, greatly regretted by every body in Bath—to whom she was indebted; and before her disconsolate husband had time to overlook a moiety of the card claims transmitted for his liquidation, he broke his neck in attempting to leap the

pound-wall of Oran-more, for a bet of a rump and dozen. Of course he was waked and buried like a gentleman—every thing sold by the creditors—my brothers sent to school—and I left to the tender mercy and sole management of the widow of Captain O’Finn.

My aunt’s guardianship continued seven years, and at the expiration of that time I was weary of her thrall, and she tired of my tutelage. I was now at an age when some walk of life must be selected and pursued. For any honest avocation I had, as it was universally admitted, neither abilities nor inclination. What was to be done? and how was I to be disposed of? A short deliberation showed that there was but one path for me to follow, and I was handed over to that *refugium peccatorum*, the army, and placed as a volunteer in a regiment just raised, with a promise from the colonel that I should be promoted to the first ensigncy that became vacant.

Great was our mutual joy when Mrs. O’Finn and I were about to part company. I took an

affectionate leave of all my kindred and acquaintances, and even, in the fulness of my heart, shook hands with the schoolmaster, though in boyhood I had devoted him to the infernal gods for his wanton barbarity. But my tenderest parting was reserved for my next door neighbour, the belle among the village beauties, and presumptive heiress to the virtues and estates of quartermaster Maginn.

Biddy Maginn was a year younger than myself; and to do her justice, a picture of health and comeliness. Lord! what an eye she had! and her leg! nothing but the gout would prevent a man from following it to the very end of Oxford-street. Biddy and I were next neighbours—our houses joined—the gardens were only separated by a low hedge—and by standing on an inverted flower-pot one could accomplish a kiss across it easily. There was no harm in the thing—it was merely for the fun of trying an experiment—and when a geranium was damaged, we left the blame upon the cats.

Although there was a visiting acquaintance

between the retired quartermaster and the relict of the defunct dragoon, never had any cordiality existed between the houses. My aunt O'Finn, was as lofty in all things appertaining to her consequence, as if she had been the widow of a common-councilman ; and Roger Maginn, having scraped together a good round sum, by the means quartermasters have made money since the days of Julius Cæsar, was not inclined to admit any inferiority on his part. Mrs. O'Finn could never imagine that any circumstances could remove the barrier in dignity which stood between the non-commissioned officer and the captain. While arguing on the saw, that "a living ass is better than a dead lion," Roger contended that he was as good a man as Captain O'Finn ; he, Roger, being alive and merry in the town of Ballinamore, while the departed commander had been laid under a "counterpane of daisies," in some countersearp in the Low Countries. Bidly and I laughed at the feuds of our superiors ; and on the evening of a desperate blow-up,

we met at sunset in the garden—agreed that the old people were fools—and resolved that nothing should interrupt our friendly relations. Of course the treaty was ratified with a kiss, for I recollect that next morning the cats were heavily censured for capsizing a box of mignonette.

No wonder then that I parted from Bidly with regret. I sat with her till we heard the quartermaster scrape his feet at the hall-door on his return from his club—and kissing poor Bidly tenderly, as Roger entered by the front, I levanted by the back door. I fancied myself desperately in love, and was actually dreaming of my dulcinea when my aunt's maid called me before day, to prepare for the stage-coach that was to convey me to my regiment in Dublin.

In a few weeks an ensigncy dropped in, and I got it. Time slipped insensibly away—months became years—and three passed before I revisited Ballinamore. I heard, at stated periods, from Mrs. O'Finn. The letters were generally a detail of bad luck or bad health. For the last

quarter she had never marked honours—or for the last week closed an eye with rheumatism and lumbago. Still as these *jérémiades* covered my small allowance, they were welcome as a lover's billet. Of course, in these despatches the neighbours were duly mentioned, and every calamity occurring since her "last," was faithfully chronicled. The Maginns held a conspicuous place in my aunt's quarterly notices. Biddy had got a new gown—or Biddy had got a new piano—but since the dragoons had come to town there was no bearing her. Young Hastings was never out of the house—she hoped it would end well—but every body knew a light dragoon could have little respect for the daughter of a quartermaster; and Mrs. O'Finn ended her observations by hinting, that if Roger went seldomer to his club, and Biddy more frequently to mass, why probably in the end it would be better for both of them.

I re-entered the well-remembered street of Ballinamore late in the evening, after an absence

of three years. My aunt was on a visit, and she had taken that as a convenient season for having her domicile newly painted. I halted at the inn, and after dinner strolled over the way to visit my quondam acquaintances, the Maginns.

If I had intended a surprise, my design would have been a failure. The quartermaster's establishment were on the *qui vive*. The fact was, that since the removal of the dragoons, Ballinamore had been dull as ditch-water; the arrival of a stranger in a postchaise, of course, had created a sensation in the place, and before the driver had unharnessed, the return of Lieutenant O'Shaughnessy was regularly gazetted, and the Maginns, in anticipation of a visit, were ready to receive me.

I knocked at the door, and a servant with a beefsteak collar opened it. Had Roger mounted a livery? Ay—faith—there it was, and I began to recollect that my aunt O'Finn had omened badly from the first moment a squadron of the 13th lights had entered Ballinamore.

I found Roger in the hall. He shook my

hand, swore it was an agreeable surprise, ushered me into the dining-room, and called for hot water and tumblers. We sat down. Deeply did he interest himself in all that had befallen me—deeply regret the absence of my honoured aunt—but I must not stay at the inn, I should be his guest; and to my astonishment, it was announced that the gentleman in the red collar had been already despatched to transport my luggage to the house. Excuses were idle. Roger's domicile was to be head-quarters, and when I remembered my old flame, Biddy, I concluded that I might for the short time I had to stay, be in a less agreeable establishment than the honest quartermaster's.

I was mortified to hear that Biddy had been indisposed. It was a bad cold, she had not been out for a month, but she would muffle herself, and meet me in the drawing-room. This, too, was unluckily a night of great importance in the club. The new curate was to be balloted for; Roger had proposed him; and, *ergo*, Roger, as a true man, was bound to be present at the cere-

mony. The thing was readily arranged. We finished a second tumbler, the quartermaster betook himself to the King's Arms, and the lieutenant, meaning myself, to the drawing-room of my old innamorata.

There was a visible change in Roger's domicile. The house was newly papered; and leaving the livery aside, there was a great increase of gentility throughout the whole establishment. Instead of bounding to the presence, by three stairs at a time as I used to do in lang syne, I was ceremoniously paraded to the lady's chamber by him of the beefsteak collar; and there reclining languidly on a sofa, and wrapped in a voluminous shawl, Biddy Maginn held out her hand to welcome her old confederate.

“My darling Biddy!”—“My dear Terence!”—and the usual preliminaries were got over. I looked at my old flame—she was greatly changed, and three years had wrought a marvellous alteration. I left her a sprightly girl—she was now a woman—and decidedly a very pretty one;

although the rosiness of seventeen was gone, and a delicacy that almost indicated bad health had succeeded; "but," thought I, "it's all owing to the cold."

There was a guarded propriety in Biddy's bearing, that appeared almost unnatural. The warm advances of old friendship were repressed, and one who had mounted a flower-pot to kiss me across a hedge, recoiled from any exhibition of our former tenderness. Well, it was all as it should be. Then I was a boy, and now a man. Young women cannot be too particular, and Biddy Maginn rose higher in my estimation.

Biddy was stouter than she promised to be when we parted, but the eye was as dark and lustrous, and the ankle as taper as when it last had demolished a geranium. Gradually her reserve abated—old feelings removed a constrained formality—we laughed and talked—ay—and kissed as we had done formerly; and when the old quartermaster's latch-key was heard unclosing the street-door, I found myself admitting

in confidence and a whisper, that "I would marry if I could." What reply Biddy would have returned I cannot tell, for Roger summoned me to the parlour, and as her cold prevented her from venturing down, she bade me an affectionate good-night. Of course she kissed me at parting—and it was done as ardently and innocently as if the hawthorn hedge divided us.

Roger had left his companions earlier than he usually did in order to honour me his guest. The new butler paraded oysters, and down we sat *tête-à-tête*. When supper was removed, and each had fabricated a red-hot tumbler from the teakettle, the quartermaster stretched his long legs across the hearthrug, and with great apparent solicitude inquired into all that had befallen me since I had assumed the shoulder-knot and taken to the trade of war.

"Humph!"—he observed—"two steps in three years; not bad considering there was neither money nor interest. D—n it! I often wish that

Biddy was a boy. Never was such a time to purchase on. More regiments to be raised, and promotion will be at a discount. Sir Hugh Haughton married a stockbroker's widow with half a plum, and paid in the two thousand I had lent him. Zounds! if Biddy were a boy, and that money well applied, I would have her a regiment in a twelvemonth."

"Phew!" I thought to myself. "I see what the old fellow is driving at."

"There never would be such another opportunity," Roger continued. "An increased force will produce an increased difficulty in effecting it. Men will be worth their own weight in money—and d—n me, a fellow who could raise a few, might have any thing he asked for."

I remarked that, with some influence and a good round sum, recruits might still be found.

"Ay, easy enough, and not much money either, if one knew how to go about the thing. Get two or three smart chaps—let them watch fairs and patterns—mind their hits when the

bumpkins got drunk, and find out when fellows were hiding from a warrant. D—n me, I would raise a hundred, while you would say Jack Robison. Pay a friendly magistrate; attest the scoundrels before they were sober enough to cry off; bundle them to the regiment next morning; and if a rascal ran away after the commanding officer passed a receipt for him, why all the better, for you could relist him when he came home again.”

I listened attentively, though in all this the cloven foot appeared. The whole was the plan of a crimp; and, if Roger was not belied, trafficking in “food for powder,” had realized more of his wealth than slop-shoes and short measure.

During the development of his project for promotion, the quartermaster and I had found it necessary to replenish frequently, and with the third tumbler Roger came nearer to business.

“Often thought it a pity, and often said so in the club, that a fine smashing fellow like you,

Terence, had not the stuff to push you on. What the devil signifies family, and blood, and all that balderdash. There's your aunt—worthy woman—but sky-high about a dead captain. D—n me—all folly. Were I a young man, I'd get hold of some girl with the wherewithal, and I would double-distance half the highfliers for a coloneley."

This was pretty significant—Roger had come to the scratch, and there was no mistaking him. We separated for the night. I dreamed, and in fancy was blessed with a wife, and honoured with a command. Nothing could be more entrancing than my visions; and when the quartermaster's *maitre d'hôtel* roused me in the morning I was engaged in a friendly argument with my beloved Biddy, as to which of his grandfathers our heir should be called after, and whether the lovely babe should be christened Roderick or Roger.

Biddy was not at breakfast; the confounded cold still confined her to her apartment; but she

hoped to meet me at dinner, and I must endure her absence until then as I best could. Having engaged to return at five, I walked out to visit my former acquaintances. From all of them I received a warm welcome, and all exhibited some surprise at hearing that I was domesticated with the quartermaster. I comprehended the cause immediately. My aunt and Roger had probably a fresh quarrel; but his delicacy had prevented him from communicating it. This certainly increased my respect for the worthy man, and made me estimate his hospitality the more highly. Still there was an evident reserve touching the Maginns; and once or twice, when dragoons were mentioned, I fancied I could detect a significant look pass between the persons with whom I was conversing.

It was late when I had finished my calls; Roger had requested me to be regular to time, and five was fast approaching. I turned my steps towards his dwelling-place, when, at a corner of a street, I suddenly encountered an old

schoolfellow on horseback, and great was our mutual delight at meeting so unexpectedly. We were both hurried however, and consequently our greeting was a short one. After a few general questions and replies, we were on the point of separating, when my friend pulled up.

“But where are you hanging out?” said Frederick Maunsell. “I know your aunt is absent.”

“I am at old Maginn’s.”

“The devil you are! Of course you heard all about Biddy and young Hastings?”

“Not a syllable. Tell it to me.”

“I have not time — it’s a long story; but come to breakfast, and I’ll give you all the particulars in the morning. Adieu!” He struck the spurs into his horse, and cantered off singing,

“Oh! she loved a bold dragoon,
With his long sword, saddle, bridle.”

I was thunderstruck. “Confound the dragoon!” thought I, “and his long sword, saddle, and bridle, into the bargain. Gad—I wish Maunsell had

told me what it was. Well—what suppose I ask Biddy herself?" I had half resolved that evening to have asked her a very different question; but, faith, I determined now to make some inquiries touching Cornet Hastings of the 13th, before Miss Biddy Maginn should be invited to become Mrs. O'Shaughnessy.

My host announced that dinner was quite ready, and I found Biddy in the eating-room. She was prettily dressed as an invalid should be; and notwithstanding her cold looked remarkably handsome. I would to a dead certainty have been over head and ears in love, had not Maunsell's inuendo respecting the young dragoon operated as a damper.

Dinner proceeded as dinners always do, and Roger was bent on hospitality. I fancied that Biddy regarded me with some interest, while momentarily I felt an increasing tenderness that would have ended, I suppose, in a direct declaration, but for the monitory hint which I had received from my old schoolfellow. I was dying

to know what Maunsell's allusion pointed at, and I casually threw out a feeler.

“And you are so dull, you say? Yes, Biddy, you must miss the dragoons sadly. By the way, there was a friend of mine here. Did you know Tom Hastings?”

I never saw an elderly gentleman and his daughter more confused. Biddy blushed like a peony, and Roger seemed desperately bothered. At last the quartermaster responded,

“Fact is—as a military man, showed the cavalry some attention—constantly at the house— anxious to be civil—helped them to make out forage—but damned wild—obliged to cut, and keep them at a distance.”

“Ay, Maunsell hinted something of that.”

I thought Biddy would have fainted, and Roger grew red as the footman's collar.

“Pshaw! d—d gossiping chap that Maunsell. Young Hastings—infernal hemp—used to ride with Biddy. Persuaded her to get on a horse of his—ran away—threw her—confined at an

inn for a week — never admitted him to my house afterwards.”

Oh! here was the whole mystery unravelled! No wonder Roger was indignant, and that Biddy would redden at the recollection. It was devilish unhandsome of Mr. Hastings; and I expressed my opinion in a way that evidently pleased my host and his heiress, and showed how much I disapproved of the conduct of that *roué* the dragoon.

My fair friend rose to leave us. Her shawl caught in the chair, and I was struck with the striking change a few years had effected in my old playfellow. She was grown absolutely stout. I involuntarily noticed it.

“ Lord! Biddy—how fat you are grown.”

A deeper blush than even when I named that luckless dragoon, flushed to her very brows at the observation, while the quartermaster rather testily exclaimed,

“ Ay—she puts on her clothes as if they were tossed on with a pitchfork, since she got this cold. D—n it, Biddy, I say, tighten your-

self, woman! Tighten yourself, or I won't be plased!"

Well, here was a load of anxiety removed, and Maunsell's mischievous inuendo satisfactorily explained away. Biddy was right in resenting the carelessness that exposed her to ridicule and danger; and it was a proper feeling in the old quartermaster, to cut the man who would mount his heiress on a break-neck horse. Gradually we resumed the conversation of last night—there was the regiment if I chose to have it—and when Roger departed for the club, I made up my mind, while ascending the stairs, to make a splice with Biddy, and become Colonel O'Shaughnessy.

Thus determined, I need not particularize what passed upon the sofa. My wooing was short, sharp, and decisive; and no affected delicacy restrained Biddy from confessing that the flame was mutual. My fears had been moonshine; my suspicions groundless. Biddy had not valued the dragoon a brass button; and—poor soul—

she hid her head upon my shoulder, and, in a soft whisper, acknowledged that she never had cared a *traneetine** for any body in the wide world but myself!

It was a moment of exquisite delight. I told her of my prospects, and mentioned the quartermaster's conversation. Biddy listened with deep attention. She blushed—strove to speak—stopped—was embarrassed. I pressed her to be courageous; and at last, she deposited her head upon my breast, and bashfully hinted that Roger was old—avarice was the vice of age—he was fond of money—he was hoarding it certainly for her; but still, it would be better that my promotion should be secured. Roger had now the cash in his own possession. If we were married without delay, it would be transferred at once; whereas, something that might appear to him advantageous might offer, and induce her father to invest it. But she was really shocked at her-

* *Anglice*, a jackstraw.

self—such a proposition would appear so indelicate; but still a husband's interests were too dear to be sacrificed to maiden timidity.

I never estimated Biddy's worth till now. She united the foresight of a sage, with the devotion of a woman. I would have been insensible, indeed, had I not testified my regard and admiration; and Biddy was still resting on my shoulder, when the quartermaster's latch-key announced his return from the club.

After supper I apprized Roger of my passion for his daughter, and modestly admitted that I had found favour in her sight. He heard my communication, and frankly confessed that I was a son-in-law he most approved of. Emboldened by the favourable reception of my suit, I ventured to hint at an early day, and pleaded "a short leave between returns," for precipitancy. The quartermaster met me like a man.

"When people wished to marry, why delay was balderdash. Matters could be quickly and quietly managed. His money was ready—no

bonds or post obits—a clean thousand in hand, and another the moment an opening to purchase a step should occur. No use in mincing matters among friends. Mrs. O’Finn was an excellent woman. She was a true friend, and a good Catholic; but d—n it, she had old-world notions about family, and in pride the devil was a fool to her. If she came home before the ceremony, there would be an endless fuss—and Roger concluded by suggesting that we should be married the next evening, and give my honoured aunt an agreeable surprise.”

That was precisely what I wanted; and a happier man never pressed a pillow than I, after my interesting colloquy with the quartermaster.

The last morning of my celibacy dawned. I met Roger only at the breakfast table; for my beloved Biddy, between cold and virgin trepidation, was *hors de combat*, and signified in a tender billet her intention to keep her chamber, until the happy hour arrived that should unite us in the silken bonds of hymen. The quarter-

master undertook to conduct the nuptial preparations; a friend of his would perform the ceremony, and the quieter the thing was done the better. After breakfast he set out to complete all matrimonial arrangements; and I strolled into the garden to ruminate on my approaching happiness, and bless Heaven for the treasure I was destined to possess in Biddy Maginn.

No place could have been more appropriately selected for tender meditation. *There* was the conscious hedge, that had witnessed the first kiss of love; ay, and for aught I knew to the contrary, the identical flower-pot on which her sylphic form had rested; sylphic it was no longer, for the slender girl had ripened into a stout and comely gentlewoman; and she would be mine—mine that very evening.

“Ah! Terence,” I said in an under tone, “Few men at twenty-one have drawn such a prize. A thousand pounds ready cash—a regiment in perspective—a wife in hand; and such a wife—young, artless, tender, and attached. By

every thing matrimonial, you have the luck of thousands?"

My soliloquy was interrupted by a noise on the other side of the fence. I looked over. It was my aunt's maid; and great was our mutual astonishment! Judy blessed herself, as she ejaculated—

“Holy Virgin! Master Terence, is that you?”

I satisfied her of my identity, and learned to my unspeakable surprise that my aunt had returned unexpectedly, and that she had not the remotest suspicion that her affectionate nephew, myself, was cantoned within pistol-shot. Without consideration I hopped over the hedge, and next minute was in the presence of my honoured protectress, the relict of the departed captain.

“Blessed angels!” exclaimed Mrs. O’Finn, as she took me to her arms, and favoured me with a kiss, in which there was more blackguard* than ambrosia “Arrah! Terence, jewel; what

* Coarse Irish snuff.

the devil drove ye here? Lord pardon me for mentioning him!”

“ My duty, dear aunt. I am but a week landed from Jersey, and could not rest till I got leave from the colonel to run down between returns, and pay you a hurried visit. Lord! How well you look!”

“ Ah! then, Terence, jewel, it's hard for me to look well, considering the way I have been fretted by the tenants, and afflicted with the lumbago. Denis Clark—may the widow's curse follow him wherever he goes!—bundled off to America with a neighbour's wife, and a year and a half's rent along with her, the thief! And then, since Holland tide, I have not had a day's health.”

“ Well, from your looks I should never have supposed it. But you were visiting at Meldrum Castle?”

“ Yes, faith, and a dear visit it was. Nothing but half-crown whist, and unlimited brag. Lost seventeen points last Saturday night. It was

Sunday morning, Christ pardon us for playing ! But what was that to my luck yesterday evening. Bragged twice for large pools, with red nines and black knaves ; and Mrs. Cooney, both times, shewed natural aces ! If ever woman sold herself, she has. The Lord stand between us and evil ! Well, Terence, you'll be expecting your quarter's allowance. We'll make it out some how—Heigh ho ! Between bad cards, and runaway tenants, I can't attend to my soul as I ought, and Holy Week coming !”

I expressed due sympathy for her losses, and regretted that her health, bodily and spiritual, was so indifferent.

“ I have no good news for you, Terence,” continued Mrs. O'Finn. “ Your brother Arthur is following your poor father's example, and ruining himself with hounds and horses. He's a weak and wilful man, and nothing can save him, I fear. Though he never treated me with proper respect, I strove to patch up a match between him and Miss Mac Teggart. Five thousand

down upon the nail, and three hundred a year failing her mother. I asked her here on a visit, and though he had ridden past without calling on me, wrote him my plan, and invited him to meet her. What do you think, Terence, was his reply? Why, that Miss Mac Teggart might go to Bath, for he would have no call to my swivel-eyed customers. There was a return for my kindness; as if a woman with five thousand *down*, and three hundred a year in expectation, was required to look straight. Ah! Terence, I wish you had been here. She went to Dublin, and was picked up in a fortnight."

Egad! here was an excellent opportunity to broach my own success. There could be no harm in making the commander's widow a confidante; and, after all, she had a claim upon me as my early protectress.

"My dear aunt, I cannot be surprised at your indignation. Arthur was a fool, and lost an opportunity that never may occur again. In fact, my dear madam, I intended to have given

you an agreeable surprise. I—I—I am on—the very brink of matrimony!”

“Holy Bridget!” exclaimed Mrs. O’Finn, as she crossed herself devoutly.

“Yes, ma’am. I am engaged to a lady with two thousand pounds.”

“Is it *ready*, Terence?” said my aunt.

“Down on the table, before the priest puts on his vestment.”

“Arrah—my blessing attend ye, Terence. I knew you would come to good.”

“Is she young?”

“Just twenty.”

“Is she good-looking?”

“More than that; extremely pretty, innocent and artless.”

“Arrah—give me another kiss, for I’m proud of ye;” and Captain O’Finn’s representative clasped me in her arms.

“But the family, Terence; remember the old stock. Is she one of us?”

“She is highly respectable. An only daughter, with excellent expectations.”

“What is her father, Terence?”

“A soldier, ma’am.”

“Lord—quite enough. He’s by profession a gentleman; and we can’t expect to find every day descendants from the kings of Connaught, like the O’Shaughnessys and the O’Finns. But when is it to take place, Terence?”

“Why, faith, ma’am, it was a bit of a secret; but I can keep nothing from you.”

“And why should ye. Haven’t I been to you more than a mother, Terence?”

“I am to be married this evening?”

“This evening! Holy Saint Patrick! and you’re sure of the money. It’s not a rent-charge—nothing of bills or bonds?”

“Nothing but bank notes; nothing but the *aragudh-sheese*.” *

“Ogh! my blessing be about ye night and day. Arrah, Terence, what’s her name?”

“You’ll not mention it. We want the thing done quietly.”

* *Anglice*, cash down.

“Augh, Terence; and do you think I would let any thing ye told me slip? By this cross,”—and Mrs. O’Finn bisected the forefinger of her left hand with the corresponding digit of the right one; “the face of clay shall never be the wiser of any thing ye mention!”

After this desperate adjuration there was no refusing my aunt’s request.

“You know her well,”—and I looked extremely cunning.

“Do I, Terence? Let me see—I have it. It’s Ellen Robinson. No—though her money’s safe, there’s but five hundred ready.”

“Guess again, aunt.”

“Is it Bessie Lloyd? No—though the old miller is rich as a jew, he would not part a guinea to save the whole human race, or make his daughter a duchess.”

“Far from the mark as ever, aunt.”

“Well,” returned Mrs. O’Finn, with a sigh, “I’m fairly puzzled.”

“Whisper!” and I playfully took her hand, and put my lips close to her cheek. “Its—”

“ Who?—who, for the sake of heaven?”

“ Biddy Maginn!”

“ Oh, Jasus!” ejaculated the captain’s relict, as she sank upon a chair. “ I’m murdered! Give me my salts, there. Terence O’Shaughnessy, don’t touch me. I put the cross between us,”—and she made a crural flourish with her hand. “ You have finished me, ye villain. Holy Virgin! what sins have I committed, that I should be disgraced in my old age? Meat never crossed my lips of a Friday; I was regular at mass, and never missed confession; and, when, the company were honest, played as fair as every body else. I wish I was at peace with poor dear Patt O’Finn. Oh! murder! murder!”

I stared in amazement. If Roger Maginn had been a highwayman, his daughter could not have been an object of greater horror to Mrs. O’Finn. At last I mustered words to attempt to reason with her, but to my desultory appeals she returned abuse fit only for a pickpocket to receive.

“ Hear me, madam.”

“ Oh, you common *ommadawn!*”*

“ For heaven’s sake, listen !”

“ Oh ! that the O’Finns and the O’Shaughnessys should be disgraced by a mean-spirited *gommouge*† of your kind !”

“ You won’t hear me.”

“ Biddy Maginn !” she exclaimed. “ Why bad as my poor brother, your father, was, and though he too married a devil that helped to ruin him, she was at all events a lady in her own right, and cousin-german to Lord Lowestoffe. But—you—you unfortunate disciple.”

I began to wax warm, for my aunt complimented me with all the abuse she could muster, and there never was a cessation but when her breath failed.

“ Why, what have I done ? What am I about doing ?” I demanded.

“ Just going,” returned Mrs. O’Finn, “ to make a Judy Fitzsimmon’s mother of yourself.”

* *Anglice, a fool.* † *A simpleton.*

“ And is it,” said I, “ because Miss Maginn can’t count her pedigree from Fin Macoul, that she should not discharge the duties of a wife.”

My aunt broke in upon me.

“ There’s one thing certain, that she’ll discharge the duties of a mother. Heavens! if you had married a girl with only a *blast*,* your connexions might brazen it out. But a woman in such a barefaced condition—as if her staying in the house these three months, could blind the neighbours, and close their mouths.”

“ Well, in the devil’s name, will you say what objection exists to Biddy Maginn making me a husband to-night?”

“ And a papa in three months afterwards!” rejoined my loving aunt.

If a shell burst in the bivouac, I could not have been more electrified. Dark suspicions flashed across my mind—a host of circumstances confirmed my doubts—and I implored the widow of the defunct dragoon to tell me all she knew.

* *Anglice, a flaw of the reputation.*

It was a simple, although, as far as I was concerned, not a flattering narrative. Biddy had commenced an equestrian novitiate under the tutelage of Lieutenant Hastings. Her progress in the art of horsemanship was no doubt very satisfactory, and the pupil and the professor frequently rode out *tête-à-tête*. Biddy, poor soul, was fearful of exhibiting any *maladresse*, and of course, roads less frequented than the king's highway were generally chosen for her riding lessons. Gradually these excursions became more extensive; twilight, and in summer too, often fell, before the quarter-master's heiress had returned; and on one unfortunate occasion she was absent for a week. This caused a desperate commotion in the town; the dowagers and old maids sat in judgment on the case, and declared Biddy no longer visitable. In vain her absence was ascribed to accident—a horse had ran away—she was thrown—her ankle sprained—and she was detained unavoidably at a country inn until the injury was abated.

In this state of things the dragoons were

ordered off; and it was whispered that there had been a desperate blow-up between the young lady's preceptor the lieutenant, and her papa the quartermaster. Once only had Biddy ventured out upon the mall; but she was cut dead by her quondam acquaintances. From that day she seldom appeared abroad; and when she did, it was always in the evening, and even then closely muffled up. No wonder scandal was rife touching the causes of her seclusion. A few charitably ascribed it to bad health—others to disappointment—but the greater proportion of the fair sex attributed her confinement to the true cause, and whispered that Miss Maginn was “as ladies wished to be, who love their lords.”

Here was a solution to the mystery! It was now pretty easy to comprehend why Biddy was swathed like a mummy, and Roger so ready with his cash. No wonder the *demoiselle* was anxious to abridge delay, and the old crimp so obliging in procuring a priest and preparing all requisite matters for immediate hymeneals. What was to

be done? What, but denounce the frail fair one, and annihilate that villain, her father. Without a word of explanation I caught up my hat—and left the house in a hurry, and Mrs. O’Finn in a state of nervousness that threatened to become hysterical.

When I reached the quarter-master’s habitation, I hastened to my own apartment and got my traps together in double quick. I intended to have abdicated quietly, and favoured the intended Mrs. O’Shaughnessey with an epistle communicating the reasons that induced me to decline the honour of her hand; but on the landing my worthy father-in-law cut off my retreat, and a parting *tête-à-tête* became unavoidable. He appeared in great spirits at the success of his interview with the parson.

“Well, Terence, I have done the business. The old chap made a parcel of objections; but he’s poor as Lazarus—silly slipped him ten pounds, and that quieted his scruples. He’s ready at a moment’s warning.”

“ He’s a useful person,” I replied drily ;
“ and all you want is a son-in-law.”

“ A what ?” exclaimed the father of Miss Biddy.

“ A son-in-law ?”

“ Why what the devil do you mean ?”

“ Not a jot more or less than what I say. You have procured the priest, but I suspect the bridegroom will not be forthcoming.”

“ Zounds, sir ! do you mean to treat my daughter with disrespect ?”

“ Upon consideration, it would be hardly fair to deprive my old friend Hastings of his pupil. Why, with another week’s private tuition, Biddy might offer her services to Astley.”

“ Sir,—if you mean to be impertinent,”—and Roger began to bluster, while the noise brought the footman to the hall, and Miss Biddy to the banisters ‘shawled to the nose.’ I began to lose temper.

“ Why, you infernal old crimp !”

“ You audacious young scoundrel !”

“ Oh, Jasus! gentlemen! Pace for the sake of the blessed mother!” cried the butler from below.

“ Father, jewel. Terence, my only love!” screamed Miss Biddy, over the staircase.—
“ What is the matter!”

“ He wants to be off,” roared the quartermaster.

“ Stop, Terence, or you’ll have my life to answer for.”

“ Lord, Biddy, how fat you are grown!”

“ You shall fulfil your promise,” cried Roger, “ or I’ll write to the Horse Guards, and memorial the commander-in-chief.”

“ You may memorial your best friend, the devil, you old crimp,”—and I forced my way to the hall.

“ Come back, you deceiver!” exclaimed Miss Maginn.

“ Arrah, Biddy, go tighten yourself,” said I.

“ Oh! I’m fainting!” screamed Roger’s heiress.

“Don’t let him out !” roared her sire.

The gentleman with the beef-steak collar made a demonstration to interrupt my retreat, and in return received a box in the ear that sent him half way down the kitchen stairs.

“There,” I said, “give that to the old rogue, your master, with my best compliments”—and bounding from the hall door, Bidy Maginn like Lord Ullin’s daughter, “was left lamenting !”

Well, there is no describing the *rookawn** a blow up like this occasioned in a country town. I was unmercifully quizzed; but the quartermaster and his heiress found it advisable to abdicate. Roger removed his household goods to the metropolis—Miss Bidy favoured him in due time with a grandson; and when I returned from South America, I learned that “this lost love of mine” had accompanied a Welsh lieutenant to the hymeneal altar, who not being “over particular” about trifles, had obtained on the

* *Anglice*, confusion.

same morning a wife, an heir, and an estate—with Roger's blessing into the bargain.

“Why, what a fool you were Terence”—said O'Connor, “had you but taken fortune at the flood, and made Miss Biddy Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, what between cash and crimping, you might have been now commanding a brigade.”

“Ay—when you know how I failed twice afterwards, you will admit that I have been an unlucky suitor.”

“What, two efforts more—and still doomed to single blessedness?”

“True enough;—in our next bivouac I'll give you the particulars. 'Tis late,—to roost boys! That hill was so infernally steep, that a man might as well escalade a windmill—nobody but the devil or Dick Magennis could climb it without distress.”

Wearied by the day's exertions, none of the party objected to the gallant Major's proposition. Quickly their simple resting-places were arranged—and as quickly they were occupied. The light

cavalry had long since detached their pickets—and every necessary precaution had been taken to guard against surprise. The hum from the distant bivouacs became fainter—the fires sparkled more brightly in the gloom—group after group betook themselves to sleep—the tattoo echoed through the hills—“while the deep war-drum’s sound announced the close of day.”

NIGHT IN THE PYRENEES—THE MURDERED
SENTINEL—AND THE GUERRILLA CHIEF.

From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night,
The hum of either army stilly sounds,
That the fix'd sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch.

KING HENRY V.

Who's there? Stand, and unfold yourself.

HAMLET.

Go—get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.

MACBETH.

CHAPTER VII.

NIGHT IN THE PYRENEES—THE MURDERED
SENTINEL—AND THE GUERRILLA CHIEF.

It was a clear and starry night, the moon had not risen, but the dark masses of mountain occupied by the rival armies, was visible for many a mile. An hundred thousand warriors were stretched upon the adjacent hills, and yet there were frequent intervals, when the rifle outpost was silent as a hermit's cell. Few sounds rose above the rush of the river, which swollen by the heavy rains tumbled over a ridge of rock, and deadened, in its roar of waters, noises that otherwise would have fallen upon the ear. Far off, occasional sparkles from the watch-fires showed

the position of the more distant brigades, while at times the sharp challenge and prompt reply rose above the stillness of the night, and indicated that the sentinels were on the alert, and the outpost officer making his "lonely round."

The bridge where Major O'Connor with three companies of his regiment was posted, was a pass of considerable importance; and, from the proximity of a French picket a vigilant look out was indispensable. The severity of the weather, fatiguing duty, and privations in food and shelter, consequent on being cantoned in a mountain position, had produced a partial discontent; and as great inducements to desert were offered by French emissaries, who visited the bivouacs with provisions, scarcely a night passed but some outpost was found abandoned, and the sentry missing when the relief came round. Of course an increased vigilance on outlying services was rendered necessary; the pickets were cautioned to be alert; and the officers directed, by making frequent and uncertain visits to the advanced

posts of their command, to satisfy themselves that the sentries were on the *qui vive*; thus guarding against surprise from the enemy, and making any attempt to quit the lines, without observation, almost an impossibility to a deserter.

When so much regarding general safety and prevention of crime depended on individual character and conduct, officers were strictly enjoined, when on duty at any advanced post, to place no sentry contiguous to a French picket, in whose steadiness the greatest confidence could not be reposed. Only the bridge in front of the rifle bivouac separated the troops that occupied it from the French tirailleurs; each of its extremities was held by a rival sentinel. The respective pickets were scarcely a pistol-shot asunder. It was the most advanced, the most important of the entire outposts, and none but an approved soldier was ever placed upon the bridge after beat of tattoo.

That an experienced and intelligent officer, like the commandant of the rifles, should feel the

great responsibility of the duty he was intrusted with, may be imagined, and at all hours of the night he visited his sentries in person. It was near morning, when silently rising from the bear-skin on which he lay, he took his cloak and sabre, and left the bivouac unnoticed by his sleeping comrades, whose slumbers appeared as sound as if the enemy were beyond the Pyrenees.

He paused at the door of the hovel, and for a few moments gazed in silent admiration at the strange and stupendous objects with which he was on every side surrounded. In front, far as the eye could range, the French and English cantonments might be traced, as "fire answered fire." Behind, a scene of Alpine magnificence was displayed, grand and imposing beyond conception. In the dim starlight, pile over pile, the higher ridges of the Pyrenees rose, until they lost their summits in the clouds; while the lower pinnacles, capped with snow, seemed spread around in wild confusion, and assumed grotesque and fanciful appearances, as the uncertain light

revealed or hid them. The deep repose of midnight—the immediate proximity of an enemy—the chance that the next sun would set upon a field of slaughter, and that the unearthly stillness that reigned in these solitudes now, would, in a few hours, be succeeded by the rush of battle, and roar of red artillery—all weighed upon the heart, and rendered this mountain night-scene, even to a careless spirit, grand, solemn, and imposing.

O'Connor found the picket duly vigilant, and learned from the subaltern in command, that the chain of sentries had been recently visited, and all were found at their posts. The night, it appeared, had passed without alarm, the French bivouacs had been unusually quiet, and no movement had been observed at the outposts, except that occasioned by the ordinary reliefs along the line. O'Connor inquired who had charge of the bridge; and when the sergeant named the man, he determined to proceed thither before he returned to his humble bearskin.

The sentry whose fidelity had excited the suspicion of his commanding officer, had more than once proved himself a daring soldier; he had volunteered two forlorn hopes, and was always foremost when skirmishing with the French light troops. But O'Connor, who carefully studied the individual character of those placed under him, had seen in the suspected man much to dislike. In disposition he was dark, violent, and unforgiving; and, even in his gallantry, there was a reckless ferocity regarding human life, that made his officers detest him. His dissipated habits had barred him from promotion, and repeated breaches of discipline obliged his commander to withhold the reward that otherwise his acknowledged bravery must have won.

The connecting sentries were vigilant, and at their posts; but when O'Connor approached the bridge, no challenge was given. His suspicions were confirmed; for on reaching the spot where the sentinel was always placed, he found the post unoccupied; a rifle and appointments were

lying on the ground, and it was quite evident that the late owner had gone over to the enemy.

This discovery mortified the soldier deeply. Since the British army had entered the Pyrenees, frequent as the offence had been, O'Connor had not lost a single man by desertion. The occurrence was annoying, and he blamed himself for not using greater circumspection. To prevent any recurrence of the crime, he determined for the future to double the sentries along the chain, and as the time for relief was not distant, he resolved to remain until it arrived, and watch the bridge himself.

He took up the deserter's rifle, and ascertained that it was primed and loaded. All was quiet—every sound was hushed, or so faint as not to be heard above the rushing of the waters. In the clear starlight he could perceive the French sentinel moving slowly backwards and forwards, occasionally stopping to look over the battlement of the bridge at the swollen river, as it forced its current through the narrow arch; and then re-

suming his measured step, humming some popular canzonet, which he had first heard under a sunny sky, and probably from lips he loved.

Ten minutes had elapsed. O'Connor kept a cautious guard, and in a short time the relief might be expected. A noise from the further side of the bridge suddenly arrested his attention. The French sentry challenged—a voice replied—and next moment a dark figure glided into the light, and closed with the *tirailleur*. A brief colloquy ensued, and the Frenchman appeared not quite satisfied with his visiter, as he kept his musket at the port, and remained some feet apart. Was this man the deserter?—No. If surprise were contemplated, he would have been retained to guide the assailants. O'Connor strained eye and ear in the direction, but the low and hurried communication was drowned by the rushing of the river, and it was impossible to conjecture who the stranger was, or what might be his errand.

A few minutes ended this uncertainty. Sud-

denly the unknown sprang within the sentry's guard—a blow was struck—a loud exclamation, and a deep groan succeeded, and then one figure only was visible in the starlight. That was the stranger's! and at a rapid pace he crossed the bridge, and confronted the English sentinel.

“Stand—or I'll fire!”

“Hold—for God's sake!”—replied a voice in tolerable English. “I am a Spaniard, and a friend.”

But the sentinel was resolute.

“Friend or foe,” he cried, “keep your distance.”

“By Heaven!” rejoined the Spaniard, “I must and will cross over.”

“One movement of hand or foot,” returned the sentry coolly, “and you are a dead man.”

“Am I not a faithful ally? What fear ye?”

“I fear nothing,” replied the English soldier.

“Have I not this moment rid you of an enemy?” said the stranger.

“Then have you done a cowardly and murderous action,” was the sentry’s answer.

“I must pass—give way, or I’ll force it.”

“My finger is on the trigger,” returned the soldier. “Another step—another whisper—and I’ll send a bullet through your heart.”

Both paused—and for half a minute neither spoke. They stood almost within arm’s length; the soldier with the rifle at his shoulder, the Spaniard with a knife grasped firmly in a hand, still reeking with the blood of the slaughtered Frenchman. A noise was heard—the measured steps of an advancing party approached, and in a few moments the relief appeared upon the bridge, and by O’Connor’s orders secured the formidable stranger.

The Spaniard offered no resistance. Two sentinels were left at the deserted post, and the relief, with their commandant and the prisoner, returned to the outlying picket. Once only the stranger spoke, and it was in reply to a com-

mand given to the guard to look to his safe custody

“Think ye,” he said, “that I am likely to return to the French outpost, and inform the detachment that I stabbed their comrade to the heart?” — and a loud laugh, as in derision, accompanied the observation.

The dark mantillo in which the Spaniard was enveloped, had hitherto concealed his person, and in the waning starlight, nothing save a tall figure and swarthy features could be discovered; but when, stopping before the fire around which the picket were collected, the blaze revealed his face, one glance assured O'Connor that his prisoner was no ordinary man.

The stranger was scarcely thirty, and were it not for his stern and vindictive expression, his face would have been singularly handsome. The dark and brilliant eye sparkled from beneath a brow which appeared to darken at the slightest contradiction; the nose was finely formed; the

teeth white and regular, while coal-black hair curling in rich profusion to his shoulders, and a high and noble forehead, completed the outlines of a countenance, that none could deny was handsome, but few would wish to look upon a second time.

A trifling incident marked the character of the stranger. The officer of the picket presented a canteen to his commander, and then politely offered it to the prisoner. He bowed, and put forward his hand; but the subaltern started—for in the blaze he observed that it was discoloured to the wrist.

“Are you hurt?” he said. “There is blood upon your hand.”

The Spaniard’s lip curled in contempt.

“Ay, likely enough,” he coolly answered. “Many a time the heart’s blood of an enemy has dyed these fingers deeper; but it would be uncivil to stain a friendly flask;” and, stepping aside, he rinsed his hands in a little rivulet that

rickled down a rock beside the watch-fire; then taking the canteen, he drank and returned it with a bow.

“Are you the commandant at this fort?” he inquired, as he turned to O’Connor.

“I am,” was the reply.

“Your name, sir?”

The soldier gave it.

“Indeed!”—exclaimed the Spaniard. “Are you he who led the assault at Badajoz?”

The soldier bowed, as he replied in the affirmative.

“Enough—I would speak with you aside;” and followed by O’Connor, he walked some distance from the watch-fire.

“You have seen me before,” said the Spaniard sharply.

“It is very possible,” was the soldier’s reply. “Under which of the Spanish commanders have you served?”

“Under none,” replied the stranger.

“Are you not a soldier, then? Just now you

hinted that more than one Frenchman had fallen by your hand."

"Yes; some have perished by my hand, and many a hundred by my order," returned the prisoner.

"Indeed? May I inquire who it is that I am addressing?"

"Willingly. Heard ye ever the name of Vicente Moreno mentioned?" asked the Spaniard.

"Moreno? Him whom the French hanged at Grenada, in the presence of his wife and children."

"And"—continued the stranger interrupting him—"whose last words to her he loved so tenderly were spoken from the scaffold, telling her to return to her home, and teach her children to follow the example of their father; and if they could not save their country, like him to die for it."

"Yes, I recollect the occurrence well," replied O'Connor. "It was the cruel murder of a brave man, and awful was the retaliation it occasioned."

“ Ay,” said the Spaniard—“ the martyr of liberty was well and speedily avenged. Before the second moon rose above the grave of the slaughtered soldier, seventy French captains were shot like mangy hounds, by my order, in the market-place at Marbella.”

“ Ha !”—exclaimed O’Connor, as he looked keenly at the Spaniard—“ am I then speaking to—”

“ Moreno, the Guerilla, the younger brother of him they murdered in the square of Grenada, stands beside you.”

O’Connor started ! “ And was the assassin of the French sentinel the far-famed chieftain of the mountain bands of Ronda ? He whose exploits wore rather the semblance of romance than the colour of reality ; whose career had been so successful and so sanguinary, that it was computed, from the hour he devoted himself to avenge his brother’s death, that more than two thousand French had been slain by the bands he commanded !” While O’Connor recollected the ruthless cha-

racter of this dreaded chief, all marvel at the scene upon the bridge ceased; for to stab an enemy who was in his way, would not be a consideration of a pin's fee to one, who in cold blood had shot his prisoners by the dozen.

“Doubtless you are both hungry and fatigued,” said the soldier, resuming his conversation with the Guerilla. “Our bivouac is hard by, and, such as it is, there we have food and shelter. Will you accept what I can offer?”

“Most willingly,” replied Moreno; “both will be welcome. For thirty hours I have tasted no food, and have been hiding in the rocks all day, and travelling hard since sunset.”

“You have then been engaged in some important enterprise?” said the soldier.

“I have been occupied as I have ever been, since I devoted myself to avenge my murdered brother, and my enslaved country.”

“In what, may I inquire?” said O'Connor.

“Doing a deed of desperate vengeance,” replied the Spaniard, in a deep voice that thrilled

to the heart. "Vengeance is what I think of when awake—vengeance is what I dream of sleeping!"

"Have you been harassing the enemy?"

"I have," returned the Guerilla, "been doing a deed that will carry terror to every Frenchman, and make the usurper tremble, when the name of Juan Moreno is pronounced. But I am weary; give me some food, and when I rest for a few hours, if you will walk with me up the heights, I will relate my last adventure."

"Come," said the soldier; and leading the way, he introduced the weary Spaniard to the hut, struck a light, and placed before him the best cheer a scanty larder could produce.

The Guerilla ate like one who had been for many hours fasting, finished a flask of wine, and then apologizing for keeping his host from his repose, stretched himself beside the soldier's bear-skin, and, as if in the full consciousness of security, dropped into a sound sleep, which remained

unbroken until the reveillée disturbed the bivouac at daybreak.

One circumstance struck O'Connor as being remarkable. Wearied as the Guerilla was before he lay down on his cloak, he took a crucifix from his bosom, and repeated his prayers devoutly. A hand, red with recent murder, punctiliously let fall a bead at every *ave*; and when his orisons were ended, he replaced the emblem of salvation, which he appeared to venerate so much, within the same breast where the knife, that had just despatched two unsuspecting victims, was deposited.

THE GUERILLA BIVOUAC—ANECDOTES OF
THEIR WARFARE AND LEADERS.

OTHELLO.—O, that the slave had forty thousand lives,
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge!
SHAKESPEARE.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE GUERILLA BIVOUAC.

WHEN the drum beat, Moreno started from his humble bed, and for a moment stared wildly round at the inmates of the hovel, who were all in motion at "the loud alarum" of the reveillée. O'Connor observed that even then his matins were not forgotten, and a hurried prayer was muttered ere he rose. Beckoning the soldier to follow, the Spaniard bowed courteously to all around, and then, wrapped in his mantillo, slowly proceeded towards the upper heights.

After an hour's ascent, which to O'Connor was particularly tiresome, but to the Guerilla easy as if he journeyed on a plain, they stepped upon a plateau among the hills, which overlooked the English and French positions. To the soldier's astonishment, Moreno pointed out the stations of the enemy's corps with surprising accuracy, and named the commanders, and numerical force of each brigade. Once or twice he referred to a written document, taken from his pocket, which was evidently a French despatch. After a short halt, he rose from the rock he had been sitting on, intimating it was time to continue his route, and invited O'Connor to keep him company for another mile.

The soldier assented, and striking into a path rendered difficult by the obstruction of a fall of snow, the Guerilla led the way with the precision of one perfectly familiar with the localities of the mountains, until, in the bosom of a deep ravine, they suddenly found themselves in the centre of a band of independents.

The appearance of this formidable body was far more picturesque than military. They might have numbered one hundred, and all were armed and equipped according to individual fancy. Some were showily attired—others slovenly to a degree; and dresses of rich velvet were singularly contrasted with the coarser clothes worn by the peasantry of Andalusia. They looked more like banditti than an organized band; but their horses were in excellent condition, and their arms of the best kind, and perfectly effective. The single word “my friend,” obtained for the visiter a rapturous welcome; and a brief description of their rencounter on the bridge, which O'Connor overheard repeated by the Guerilla, seemed to recommend him to the troop, as a fitting comrade for their bold and reckless leader.

There was in the whole system of Guerilla warfare a wild and romantic character, which, could its cruelty have been overlooked, would have rendered it both chivalrous and exciting. Men totally unfitted by previous habits and edu-

cation suddenly appeared upon the stage, and developed talent and determination that made them the scourge and terror of the invaders. But theirs was a combat of extermination—none of those courtesies, which render modern warfare endurable, were granted to their opponents—the deadliest hostility was unmitigated by success—and, when vanquished, expecting no quarter from the French, they never thought of extending it to those who unfortunately became their prisoners. A sanguinary struggle was raging; and *va victis* seemed, with “war to the knife,” to be the only mottos of the Guerilla.

The strange exploits of many of these daring partisans, though true to the letter, are perfectly romantic; and the patient endurance, the deep artifice, with which their objects were effected, appear to be almost incredible. Persons, whose ages and professions were best calculated to evade suspicion, were invariably their chosen agents. The village priest was commonly a confederate of the neighbouring Guerilla—the postmaster be-

trayed the intelligence that reached him in his office—the fairest peasant of Estremadura would tempt the thoughtless soldier with her beauty, and decoy him within range of the bullet—and even childhood was frequently and successfully employed in leading the unsuspecting victim into some pass or ambuscade, where the knife or musket closed his earthly career.

In every community, however fierce and lawless, different gradations of good and evil will be discovered, and nothing could be more opposite than the feelings and actions of some of the Guerillas and their leaders. Many of these desperate bands were actuated in every enterprise by a love of bloodshed and spoliation, and their own countrymen suffered as heavily from their rapacity, as their enemies from their swords. Others took the field from nobler motives: an enthusiastic attachment to their country and religion roused them into vengeance against a tyranny which had become insufferable—every feeling but ardent patriotism was forgotten—private and dearer ties

were snapped asunder—homes, and wives, and children were abandoned—privations that appear almost incredible were patiently endured, until treachery delivered them to the executioner, or in some wild attempt they were overpowered by numbers, and died resisting to the last.

Dreadful as the retaliation was which French cruelty and oppression had provoked, the Guerilla vengeance against domestic treachery was neither less certain or less severe. To collect money or supplies for the invaders, convey any information, conceal their movements, and not betray them when opportunity occurred, was death to the offender. Sometimes the delinquent was brought with considerable difficulty and risk before a neighbouring tribunal, and executed with all the formalities of justice; but generally a more summary vengeance was exacted, and the traitor was sacrificed upon the spot. In these cases neither calling nor age was respected. If found false to his country, the sanctity of his order was no protection to the priest. The daughter of the Col-

lector of Almagro, for professing attachment to the usurper, was stabbed by Urena to the heart; and a secret correspondence, between the wife of the Alcalde of Birhueda and the French general in the next command, having been detected by an intercepted despatch, the wretched woman, by order of Juan Martin Diez, the Empecinado, was dragged by a Guerilla party from her house, her hair shaven, her denuded person tarred and feathered and disgracefully exhibited in the public market-place—and she was then put to death amid the execrations of her tormentors. Nor was there any security for a traitor, even were his residence in the capital, or almost within the camp of the enemy. One of the favourites of Joseph Bonaparte, Don Jose Rigo, was torn from his home in the suburbs of Madrid, while celebrating his wedding, by the Empecinado, and hanged in the square of Cadiz. The usurper himself, on two occasions, narrowly escaped from this desperate partisan. Dining at Almeda, some two leagues distance from the capital, with one of the

generals of division, their hilarity was suddenly interrupted by the unwelcome intelligence that the Empecinado was at hand, and nothing but a hasty retreat preserved the pseudo king from capture. On another occasion, he was surprised upon the Guadalaxara road, and so rapid was the Guerilla movement, so determined their pursuit, that before the French could be succoured by the garrison of Madrid, forty of the royal escort were sabred between Torrejon and El Molar.

A war of extermination raged, and on both sides blood flowed in torrents. One act of cruelty was as promptly answered by another; and a French decree, ordering that every Spaniard taken in arms should be executed, appeared to be a signal to the Guerillas to exclude from mercy every enemy who fell into their hands. The French had shown the example; the Junta were denounced, their houses burned, and their wives and children driven to the woods. If prisoners received quarter in the field—if they fell lame upon the march, or the remotest chance of a rescue

appeared—they were shot like dogs ; others were butchered in the towns, their bodies left rotting on the highways, and their heads exhibited on poles. That respect, which even the most depraved of men usually pay to female honour, was shamefully disregarded ; and more than one Spaniard, like the postmaster of Medina, was driven to the most desperate courses, by the violation of a wife and the murder of a child.

It would be sickening to describe the horrid scenes which mutual retaliation produced. Several of the Empecinado's followers, who were surprised in the mountains of Guadarama, were nailed to the trees, and left there to expire slowly by hunger and thirst. To the same trees, before a week elapsed, a similar number of French soldiers were affixed by the Guerillas. Two of the inhabitants of Madrid, who were suspected of communicating with the brigands, as the French termed the armed Spaniards, were tried by court-martial, and executed at their own door. The next morning six of the garrison were seen

hanging from walls beside the high road. Some females related to Palarea, surnamed the Medico, had been abused most scandalously by the escort of a convoy, who had seized them in a wood; and in return the Guerilla leader drove into an ermida eighty Frenchmen and their officers, set fire to the thatch, and burned them to death, or shot them in their endeavours to leave the blazing chapel. Such were the dreadful enormities a system of retaliation caused.

These desperate adventurers were commanded by men of the most dissimilar professions. All were distinguished by some *sobriquet*, and these were of the most opposite descriptions. Among the leaders were friars and physicians, cooks and artisans, while some were characterized by a deformity, and others named after the form of their waistcoat or hat. Worse epithets described many of the minor chiefs—truculence and spoliation obtained them titles; and, strange as it may appear, the most ferocious band that infested Biscay, was commanded by a woman named

Martina. So indiscriminating and unrelenting was this female monster in her murder of friends and foes, that Mina was obliged to direct his force against her. She was surprised, with the greater portion of her banditti, and the whole were shot upon the spot.

Of all the Guerilla leaders the two Minas were the most remarkable for their daring, their talents, and their successes. The younger, Xavier, had a short career, but nothing could be more chivalrous and romantic than many of the incidents that marked it. His band amounted to a thousand, and with this force he kept Navarre, Biscay, and Aragon, in confusion; intercepted convoys, levied contributions, plundered the custom-houses, and harassed the enemy incessantly. The villages were obliged to furnish rations for his troops, and the French convoys supplied him with money and ammunition. His escapes were often marvellous. He swam flooded rivers deemed impassable, and climbed precipices hitherto untraversed by a human foot. Near Estella he was

forced by numbers to take refuge on a lofty rock ; the only accessible side he defended till night-fall, when lowering himself and followers by a rope, he brought his party off with scarcely the loss of a man.

This was among his last exploits ; for when reconnoitring by moonlight, in the hope of capturing a valuable convoy, he fell unexpectedly into the hands of an enemy's patrol. Proscribed by the French as a bandit, it was surprising that his life was spared ; but his loss to the Guerillas was regarded as a great misfortune.

While disputing as to the choice of a leader, where so many aspired to a command to which each offered an equal claim, an adventurer worthy to succeed their lost chief was happily discovered in his uncle, the elder Mina. Educated as a husbandman, and scarcely able to read or write, the new leader had lived in great retirement, until the Junta's call to arms induced him to join his nephew's band. He reluctantly acceded to the general wish to become Xavier Mina's suc-

cessor, but when he assumed the command, his firm and daring character was rapidly developed. Echeverria, with a strong following, had started as a rival chief; but Mina surprised him—had three of his subordinates shot with their leader—and united the remainder of the band with his own. Although he narrowly escaped from becoming a victim to the treachery of a comrade, the prompt and severe justice with which he visited the offender, effectually restrained other adventurers from making any similar attempt.

The traitor was a sergeant of his own, who, from the bad expression of his face, had received among his companions the *sobriquet* of Malcardo. Discontented with the new commander, he determined to betray him to the enemy, and concerted measures with Pannetia, whose brigade was near the village of Robres, to surprise the Guerilla chieftain in his bed. Partial success attended the treacherous attempt; but Mina defended himself desperately with the bar of the door, and kept the French at bay till Gastra, his

chosen comrade, assisted him to escape. The Guerilla rallied his followers, repulsed the enemy, took Malcarado, and shot him instantly, while the village curé and three alcades implicated in the traitorous design, were hanged side by side upon a tree, and their houses razed to the ground.

An example of severity like this gave confidence to his own followers, and exacted submission from the peasantry. Every where Mina had a faithful spy—every movement of the enemy was reported—and if a village magistrate received a requisition from a French commandant, it was communicated to the Guerilla chief with due despatch, or wo to the alcalde that neglected it.

Nature had formed Mina for the service to which he had devoted himself. His constitution was equal to every privation and fatigue, and his courage was of that prompt and daring character, that no circumstance, however sudden and disheartening, could overcome. Careless as to dress or food, he depended for a change of linen on the capture of French baggage, or any accidental

supply; and for days he would exist upon a few biscuits, or any thing which chance threw in his road. He guarded carefully against surprise—slept with a dagger and pistols in his girdle—and such were his active habits, that he rarely took more than two hours of repose. The mountain caverns were the depositories of his ammunition and plunder; and in a mountain fastness he established an hospital for his wounded, to which they were carried in litters across the heights, and placed in perfect safety, until their cure could be completed. Gaming and plunder were prohibited, and even love forbidden, lest the Guerilla might be too communicative to the object of his affection, and any of his chieftain's secrets should transpire.

Of the minor chiefs many strange and chivalrous adventures are on record. The daring plans, often tried and generally successful, and the hairbreadth escapes of several, are almost beyond belief. No means, however repugnant to the laws of modern warfare, were unemployed; while

the ingenuity with which intelligence of a hostile movement was transmitted—the artifice with which an enemy was delayed, until he could be surrounded or surprised, appear incredible. Of individual ferocity a few instances will be sufficient. At the execution of an alcalde and his son at Mondragon, the old man boasted that two hundred French had perished by their hands; and the Chaleco, Francis Moreno, in a record of his services, boasts of his having waited for a cavalry patrol in a ravine, and, by the discharge of a huge blunderbuss loaded nearly to the muzzle, dislocated his own shoulder, and killed or wounded nine of the French. The same chief presented to Villafranca a rich booty of plate and quicksilver, but he added to the gift a parcel of ears cut from the prisoners whom on that occasion he had slaughtered.

Profiting by the anarchy that reigned in this afflicted country, wretches, under political excuses, committed murder and devastation on a scale of frightful magnitude. One, pretending

to be a functionary of the junta, made Ladrada a scene of bloodshed. By night his victims were despatched; and to the disgrace of woman, his wife was more sanguinary than himself. Castanos at length arrested their blood-stained career; and Pedrazeula was hanged and beheaded, and Maria, his infamous confederate, garotted.

Castile was overrun by banditti; and one gang, destroyed by a Guerilla chief named Juan Abril, had accumulated plunder, principally in specie, amounting in value to half a million reales. One of the band, when captured by the French, to save his life discovered the secret, and offered to lead a party to the place where the treasure was deposited. His proposal was accepted. An alguazil, with an escort of cavalry, proceeded to the wood of Villa Viciosa, and there booty was found worth more than the value affixed to it by the deserter. Returning in unsuspecting confidence, the party were drawn into an ambuscade by the Medico, who had been acquainted with the expedition; and of the escort

and officials, with the exception of five who managed to escape, every one was butchered without mercy.

Such were the wild and relentless foes to whom the invaders were exposed—such were the Spaniards, who had made themselves remarkable for patriotism and endurance—surpassing courage and unmitigated cruelty. In those around him O'Connor looked upon men who, through the whole Peninsular struggle, had carried terror with their names, and in the leader, who was standing beside him apart from the band, he recognised a chieftain, in whose breast, if report were true, fear and compassion were equally extinguished.

EL MANCO—A GUERILLA BREAKFAST.

2d MURDERER. I'm one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incens'd, that I am reckless what
I do, to spite the world.

1st MURDERER. And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on't.

SHAKSPEARE.

CHAPTER IX.

A GUERILLA BREAKFAST.

“WHAT think you of my band?” said the Guerilla leader to Major O’Connor, as he observed the soldier’s eye examining the formidable troop, who were preparing their breakfast in the valley below the rock to which Moreno and his companion had removed. “Compared with your own beautiful and efficient regiment, what a wretched rabble my wild followers must appear!”

“Far from it, my friend,” replied the soldier. “Their clothing and appointments are certainly irregular, and one who looked to dresses, and not the men who wore them, might hold your band

in slight estimation. Your followers appear active and determined soldiers, and some of them the finest fellows I have ever seen."

The Guerilla seemed pleased with the approbation his troop received from O'Connor.

"And yet," he said, "the youngest and the most powerful are not those who have shed most blood, or wreaked the deepest vengeance on our common enemy. The weakest arm is sometimes united to the strongest heart; and while our morning meal is in preparation, I will point out to you the most remarkable among my comrades."

"Nothing would give me greater pleasure," said the soldier. "Many of their histories must be singular indeed."

"Yes," replied the Guerilla; "there are among my followers men who have met with strange adventures, and whose lives commenced very differently to the manner in which it is now most probable they will close. Injury and outrage forced most of them to take up arms; and had

not the oppressors crossed these mountains, they would have worn their lives away in their native valleys, as peaceful vinedressers or contented artisans. Mark you that old man leaning against a rock?"

"I do," returned the soldier. "The grey hair and diminutive person would lead one to reckon him the least formidable of your companions."

The chief smiled.

"Is there any thing beside, which strikes you in him as remarkable?"

"I observe," returned the soldier, "that he is provided with a musket of unusual length."

"And," continued the Guerilla, "one arm is lame, from whence he has obtained the surname of El Manco. Many an enemy has perished by that old man's hand—many a French heart the bullets from that gun have searched."

"Indeed?"

"Yes," said the chief. "El Manco was wantonly injured, but he was as desperately avenged. There was not a more peaceable peasant in Castile. He occupied the cottage where his parents

had lived and died, and laboured in the same farm which his forefathers had tilled for centuries. His home was in a sequestered valley among the hills, and its remoteness might have been expected to secure the humble owner from the insults of an invader. But no—where is the wood or dell so retired, that it has escaped the cruelty and rapacity of the oppressors?

“Late one evening a small party of French dragoons appeared unexpectedly among the mountains; and the secluded valley where El Manco dwelt was soon discovered by these marauders. They approached the old man’s cottage, were civilly received, accommodated with food and wine, their horses supplied with corn, and all that submissive peasants could do to propitiate their clemency was tried. How was El Manco’s hospitality returned? He had no gold to tempt their cupidity, and in his peaceful occupation and feeble strength, there was no plea to excite apprehension or justify severity. But he was a husband and a father. His wife retained some portion of

her former beauty; and his daughters, only verging upon womanhood, were singularly handsome. Morning had just dawned—the order to march was given, and the unhappy family supposing that, pleased with the civility they had experienced through the night, the marauders would take a friendly leave, came forward to say farewell. Half the party mounted, when, on a signal from their officer, a dozen ruffians seized on the peasant's daughters, and placed them before two dragoons. In vain the astonished mother clung wildly to one of her beloved ones—in vain the father rushed upon the horseman who held the other. He was maimed for life by a sword-cut, and his wife was savagely shot by the horseman, from whose ruffian grasp she had striven to extricate her child. Wounded and bewildered, El Manco leaned over the dying woman. In a few minutes she breathed her last, and her groans mingled with her daughters' shrieks, as they came at intervals from the moun-

tains, over which the ravishers were carrying them.

“For three months El Manco remained an idiot, and during that time no tidings of his children could be obtained. At length they returned to their once happy and innocent home;—one only to die, the other to exist dishonoured. The story of their wrongs seemed to rouse their wretched father—memory came back—he swore eternal, implacable revenge, and quitted his native valley for ever. His only arms were the gun you see, and the knife he carries in his bosom. Bred a hunter in his youth, he was an excellent marksman, and his intimate knowledge of the mountain district, facilitated his efforts at vengeance. Placing himself in ambush beside a pass, he would wait for days and nights with patient vigilance, until some straggling enemy came within range of his musket; and an unerring bullet conveyed to the dying Frenchman, the first intimation that danger was at hand. Numerous

parties were constantly sent out to apprehend the dreaded brigand. Frequently they found El Manco in the forest, to all appearance peaceably employed in cutting wood; and deceived by his age, the simplicity of his answers, and his feebleness, they were contented with seeking information, to enable them to apprehend the criminal. Accident at last betrayed El Manco's secret; but before the discovery was made, more than sixty Frenchmen had fallen by the hand of that maimed and powerless being. Of course, he was obliged to fly, and since that time he has attached himself to the party I command."

"It is a strange tale, certainly," said the soldier; "and to look at El Manco, none could suppose him to be capable of such desperate retaliation."

"It shows," replied the Spaniard, "that the humblest individual, when wantonly abused, has means sufficient for revenge, if he has only courage to make the essay. Did you know the private histories of this band, half the number of

those who fill my ranks have been forced there by injury and oppression. War drove them from more peaceful vocations, and want obliged them to adopt a course of life, for which, under other circumstances, they had neither inclination nor ability. When the noble refused to submit to the thrall of a foreign despot, and was beggared by the spoliations of the tyrant's minions, those who depended on him as retainers shared in the ruin of their protector. The hidalgo was driven from his hereditary estate, the farmer had his crops cut down, and his vineyard and olive-ground devastated. The labourer lacked his wonted occupation, and flung the implements of husbandry away, to take up knife and musket. Religious houses were suppressed—the monk was ejected from his seclusion—he entered at manhood upon a world he was unused to—death was the penalty of wearing his sacred habit—and the priest's cassock was exchanged for the Guerilla cloak. Look over yonder troop, and there every calling will be found—every grada-

tion of rank—from the ruined noble to the bankrupt tradesman.—But here comes breakfast. Last night, major, you and I were like enough to prove the temper of the knife —this morning we'll employ it for friendlier purposes.”

The Guerilla's meal was a strange melange. There was broiled mutton, an English ham, a flask of superior wine, French biscuits, rye bread, and two or three nameless culinary preparations. Every thing was served in plate; and dish, cup, and spoon were all of massive silver. The Spaniard smiled at O'Connor's astonishment.

“ You see how we mountain soldiers live. England and France, Italy and Spain, have furnished materials for our breakfast; and these silver vessels, but a short time since, were ranged upon a royal sideboard. In truth, my friend, we are indebted for them all to El Rey Jose. I picked up a part of the baggage at Vittoria, and we have made free with viands provided for the usurper, but which the chance of war gave to

honester men—you and me. Drink—that wine is excellent. An hour hence we march; and if you please it, to fill up the interval, I will tell you some adventures of my own.”

CONFESSIONS OF A GUERILLA.

Vengeance, deep brooding o'er the slain,
Had locked the source of softer wo ;
And burning pride, and high disdain,
Forbade the rising tear to flow.

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

CHAPTER X

CONFESSIONS OF A GUERRILLA.

I AM the youngest son of an old soldier. My mother died while I was an infant; and my father, after serving in the Royal Guard for thirty years, quitted the corps from ill health—retired to his native village—and, on his pension and paternal estate, lived hospitably, until, at a good old age, he slipped away calmly from the world, respected and regretted by all who knew him.

There were twenty years between Vicente, my elder brother, and myself. At our father's death he was a man, and I but a schoolboy. Although left an orphan, I had no destitution to complain

of; Vicente was the best of brothers—he treated me with parental tenderness—watched over my education—directed my studies—and, when I arrived at that time of life when a profession should be selected, he procured for me an appointment in the capital, and allotted me a liberal portion of his income, to enable me to maintain myself as a gentleman, until, by the routine of office, I should obtain some more lucrative post. Never was a man less adapted by nature for a life of rapine and bloodshed than I. My disposition was quiet and contemplative—books were my chief delight—I read much—and, not contented with the literature of Spain, applied myself to learn the languages of modern Europe, and acquired a sufficient knowledge of French and English, which enabled me to speak both with tolerable fluency. Such were my earlier habits and pursuits; and at twenty-two none could have supposed it possible, that, in a few brief months, the peaceful student of Madrid should become the brigand chief of Ronda.

The director of the office, to which I was attached, was a man of noble descent and amiable character. He was called Don Jose Miranda. His place was very lucrative; and as he had a small estate, and was a widower with but one child, it was believed that the young Catalina would inherit, at her father's death, a very considerable fortune.

The director appeared partial to me from the beginning—took pains in teaching me the duties of the office—showed me every civility in his power—and frequently brought me to his house, a villa, pleasantly situated at about a league's distance from the city. There I passed many a happy hour—for there I first became acquainted with Catalina.

I saw and loved her. You, a soldier from boyhood, who, haply, know the passion but by name, would smile at the weakness I must confess, did I own the ardour, the devotion, with which my heart worshipped the director's daughter. Who could look on Catalina and remain un-

moved? She was then scarcely sixteen, and just springing into womanhood, with all the charms that render beauty irresistible. Then I was different from what I now am—care had not settled on my brow—this hand was unstained with blood—this heart was not wrung by injury and insult—this bosom was not burning with revenge. Then no anxieties disturbed it; and all it throbbed for was the object of its love—the young, the peerless Catalina.

I did not sue in vain. My mistress listened to my declaration of attachment with evident pleasure—and I was accepted. The director, when a female relative who superintended his household affairs and the education of Catalina informed him of our *liaison*, expressed no dissatisfaction; on the contrary his kindness towards me appeared increased.

Months passed over—my love became more ardent and engrossing—and, unable to endure a longer suspense, I obtained Catalina's consent to demand her hand from the director, and formally

made the necessary communication. He heard me, and objected only to the want of a sufficient fortune on my part; but, at the same time, he proposed to remedy that evil. He was becoming old—the state of political affairs was more than threatening—a national convulsion was at hand—he wished to retire from official labour—and, he said, that he would signify his intention to the government, and obtain the appointment for me.

It was done. His application was favourably received—and it was duly intimated by the minister of finance that I should be Don Jose's successor. All objection to my union with Catalina was removed, and the day was named on which she was to become my wife.

The revolution broke out suddenly—events were hurried to a rapid crisis—the French occupied Madrid—and every department of the executive was thrown into confusion. In all the state offices persons suspected of attachment to their lawful king, became obnoxious to the usurper; they were unceremoniously discarded,

and the minions of the invader substituted in their stead. I had no fancy for political intrigues, consequently I had never been a partisan, and it might have been supposed that I should have escaped the wrath of the despot; but, before I suspected danger, an event occurred which overturned all my hopes, and rendered me for ever a wretched and a ruined man.

Driven to madness by foreign oppression, the peasantry of Andalusia had broken into insurrection, and declared deadly hostility to the invaders. Valdenebro appeared at their head—while my brother Vicente joined the mountaineers of Ronda as their leader. Before any intelligence reached me of these events, a great portion of my native province was in arms; and an enemy's detachment, which had imprudently advanced into the mountains, became entangled in a defile, and were cut off to a man, by a sudden attack made upon them by the Moreno.

I was at the director's villa, and, ignorant of this occurrence, was seated beside my beloved

Catalina—my arm was around her waist, her head was resting on my bosom, and her dark and sparkling eyes turned upon mine, as, in playful raillery, she taxed me with some fanciful offence. A bustle without, a tramping of feet and ringing of spurs, was heard along the paved corridor. Presently the door was thrown open, and a French officer of dragoons strode haughtily across the chamber, while his orderly remained standing in the doorway. I sprang up, placed myself between Catalina and the intruder, and demanded his name and business. He smiled ironically.

“ I am called Henri de Blondville,” he said, “ a captain of hussars ; and you, if I am not misinformed, are Don Juan Moreno.”

“ I am Juan Moreno,” I replied.

“ Then I must interrupt your *tête-à-tête*, my friend. Here, Pierre—here is your prisoner.” Half-a-dozen hussars instantly came in. I remonstrated, but it was unavailing, and demanded to know the nature of my offence, and the authority by which I was treated like a malefactor.

“ This is my warrant,” replied the Frenchman, as he scornfully touched the handle of his sabre. “ Secure the gentleman,” he continued, addressing his myrmidons. I was instantly seized—hand-cuffed like a deserter—torn from the house, and not permitted to await the recovery of Catalina, who had fainted on the sofa, nor allowed to bid my affianced wife farewell.

I was mounted on a dragoon horse, escorted by a troop of cavalry, and not permitted to procure a cloak or a change of linen. Transferred from troop to troop, without rest, without food, until I was completely worn down with suffering and fatigue, my journey terminated at Grenada; there, without any colourable pretext, I was thrown into a damp and solitary dungeon, where none but desperate malefactors were confined.

A long month wore heavily away. I lay pining in a loathsome cell, never seeing a human countenance except the keeper's, who visited me at midnight with a supply of coarse food, barely

sufficient to sustain life. My bodily sufferings were severe enough, but what were they compared to the mental agony I endured, when my deserted bride and her helpless parent were remembered. My offences, whatever they might be, would probably be visited on them; and when I thought of the licentious character of the invaders, I shuddered to think that Catalina was so beautiful and so unprotected.

The thirtieth night of my melancholy captivity arrived, and the hour of the jailer's visit was at hand. I heard a sudden uproar in the prison, and, even remote as my dungeon was, the shouts of men, and the sharp discharge of small arms, reached it. The affray was short as it had been sudden—the noises died away—the conflict was over, or the combatants were engaged at a greater distance from my cell. It was a strange and unusual event, and I longed for the appearance of the keeper, to ask him what had caused this midnight tumult.

At last the key grated in the dungeon lock, and my jailer entered. He looked like a person who had been engaged in a recent affray; and to judge from his torn clothes, and head bound up in a bloody handkerchief, he had suffered in the scuffle. When I asked what had occasioned the late confusion, he regarded me with a ferocious stare—left the loaf and pitcher down—and, as he turned to the door, muttered, “I suspect, my friend, that *you* will know more about it in the morning!” and abruptly quitting the cell, left me to solitude and darkness.

Day broke, and I waited impatiently to learn the meaning of the keeper’s threat, nor was I long kept in uncertainty. The footsteps of several men sounded in the vaulted passage, my dungeon was unlocked, and the keeper entered, accompanied by a military guard with drawn bayonets, and desired me to rise and follow him. I obeyed; and, mounting by a flight of stone stairs, found myself in the prison-hall, where

General Sebastiani, attended by a numerous staff and a few civilians, was sitting in judgment on a prisoner.

That he was one was evident enough, for I remarked that both his hands and feet were strongly fettered. His back was turned to me as he confronted his judge; but from his hat and mantillo, I guessed him to be a Spaniard. The hall was encircled by a triple file of soldiers, and a deathlike silence ensued, as the French general ceased speaking on my entrance with the guard.

“Approach, young man,” he said, after a minute’s pause.

I did as I was ordered, and came forward to the table where my fellow-captive stood.

“Look up,” continued the Frenchman, “and tell me if you know the prisoner?”

The captive remained regarding steadily the person on whose decision his fate rested. I raised my eyes to examine his face. Great God!—it was no strange countenance that met my glance—the prisoner was my brother!

“Vicente!” I exclaimed. He started at the well-known voice, and next moment we were in each other’s arms. Gently disengaging himself from my embrace, he held me at a little distance as he mournfully replied—

“And is this wreck of manhood thou, my beloved brother? Alas, Juan—thy free spirit agrees but poorly with a tyrant’s thrall. I need not ask how thou hast fared; that withered cheek and sunken eye tell plainly enough how well chains and captivity can work the wrath of the oppressor. I heard but two days since of thy arrest; and I would have delivered thee, but for the treachery of yonder miscreant,”—and he pointed his finger scornfully towards a man who was standing at a distance, and whom I recognised at once to be the alguazil of my native village. This explained the cause of the midnight disturbance, and the jailer’s menace. My brother had made a desperate attempt to effect my liberation. He surprised and cut down the prison guard. His success would have been certain;

but a traitor had betrayed him, and his own capture and certain death resulted.

Sebastiani and his staff watched our interview with marked attention. He whispered to an aide-de-camp, who withdrew from the hall, and the general then addressed himself to me.

“Juan Moreno,” he said, “attend and answer me.”

I bowed, and the general proceeded.

“You are accused, that, contrary to the royal decree, condemning to death all Spaniards taken in arms, and all who abet and assist them—you have been in communication with the brigands in the mountains of Ronda, and that, through information sent from the capital by you, much of the mischief they have perpetrated has been caused. How say ye—are these charges true—and are you guilty of this treason?”

Before I could reply, my brother addressed Sebastiani.

“General,” he said, “you have offered me liberty and preferment, and I have refused them,

because I could only accept them with the loss of honour. Judge whether, to free another, I would do that, which, even to save myself, I have declined doing. Think not that I am reckless of life. No—there are ties which bind me to it ardently. I am a husband—and I am a father. Now by the hope of Heaven, which must enable me with firmness to go through the scene that is approaching—by the unsullied honour of a Spaniard, Juan Moreno is guiltless of the charge you have accused him of.”

There was a pause—and the solemnity of my brother’s declaration seemed to confirm my innocence with the greater number of those who had listened to him. An impression had evidently been made upon the French officers in my favour, when the corregidor of La Mancha, the villain Ciria, who had joined the enemy, and pursued every patriot with undying hatred, remarked that the anxiety of a brother to save his kinsman was just and natural; but, unfortunately, the testimony of an unprejudiced man had established

the fact, that a treasonable correspondence existed between Vicente and me.

Moreno darted a withering look at the betrayer of his country.

“What!” he exclaimed. “Mind ye the assertions of yon pale-faced traitor?—A miscreant false to his nation and his God! One, who like the arch-deceiver of old, has sold for silver the blood of innocence so frequently. Would the denunciations of such a wretch be deemed worthy of belief by any man of honour. But I am wrong to permit an abject traitor to disturb any portion of the brief space of life that now remains.”

“Moreno!”—said Sebastiani.—“You have two lives at your disposal. Save your brother’s and your own. Accept my offers, or you know the alternative.”

“I know it, general; and I have made my decision from the moment I became your prisoner.”

“Pause”—said the Frenchman. “Remem-

ber, no hope but one remains. Your band cannot save—”

“But,” said the Guerrilla with a smile, “they can avenge me! I have a last request. Allow me a confessor, and a few minutes of private conversation with my brother.”

“Both are granted. I have already despatched my aide-de-camp to his convent for the priest you named, and you may retire into the adjoining room with your brother until the monk arrives.”

“I thank you, general, for this indulgence; nay, I feel convinced that in your own heart you loathe the duty which obliges you to visit the man who strikes for freedom, with the penalties traitors only should incur.”

We were conducted into a small chamber which opened off the hall, and looked out upon the market. One close-barred window gave it light; and through the open lattice we saw the scaffold erected, on which, in another hour, Vicente was to seal his loyalty with his life.

“Juan,” he said, “thou knowest how tenderly

I love thee ; and, brief as my span of existence is, I would use it in preparing thee for death or life. If thou art to be another victim, bear thy doom manfully, and prove upon the scaffold how calmly a Spaniard can abide the tyrant's decree. If thou art spared, devote thyself to avenge thy country's wrongs—thy brother's slaughter. Now tax thy energies, for I have evil news to tell. Canst thou hear of ruined hopes ?—of—”

“ What ! ”—I exclaimed, as he hesitated.—
 “ What of Catalina ? Have they wronged her ?—
 Have they—.”

“ Patience, my brother, and man thyself—
 none can wrong—.”

He stopped again.

“ Go on, Vicente. Go on. All this is torture.”

“ The dead,”—he added solemnly.

“ The dead !—Is Catalina dead ? ”

“ She is,” he returned. “ Ten days after you had been torn away, while thy betrothed was lying in a fever, they seized the old man, and

incarcerated him. The shock was fatal. She became delirious, and expired on the third day, without the consolation of knowing that a lover watched her couch, or a parent closed her eyes. Jose Miranda heard the tidings—he never raised his head afterwards, and in a week they laid him in the same cemetery where Catalina rests.”

“ God of justice !” I exclaimed, “ can such villany and oppression escape unpunished ?”

“ Thou mayst yet have vengeance in thy power; and the last efforts of my life shall be used to save thine. Should I succeed, remember Vicente and avenge him. Here comes the priest. Farewell, a last farewell, my Juan. The monk will visit thee when the trial of my firmness is over, and tell thee how calmly thy brother died !”

We embraced—were separated—I reconducted to my cell, and Vicente led to execution. In the presence of his wife and children they hanged him like a dog. How his last moments passed—how

nobly he submitted to his martyrdom—thou know'st already.

The fading sunbeams penetrated the grated loophole of my dungeon—and it was resolved that I should never see them set again. Moreno's firmness on the scaffold had incensed the bloodhounds who had sent him there, while the deep sympathy exhibited by the spectators alarmed and exasperated Civia and Fernandez, his renegade confederate, and the betrayer of my brother. They urged on Sebastiani the expediency of example, and exhorted him to check this popular display of pity and admiration. The French general yielded a reluctant consent, and the warrant for my execution next morning was officially prepared.

It was an unusual hour for a visit, when I heard the keeper turn his key. He came accompanied by a monk, and showed me the fatal warrant. The death of my affianced bride—the murder of my gallant brother—the total wreck of worldly happiness had rendered life so valueless,

that, but for the hope of revenge, I would have parted with existence, and felt that death was a relief.

“ Art thou prepared to die, my son ?” said the friar, after the jailer had read the fatal mandate.

“ Better I trust, father, than they who are spillers of innocent blood.”

“ Art thou ready,” continued the monk, “ to submit to thy fate with resignation ; and, like a Christian man, forgive thy enemies and persecutors ?”

“ I will meet my doom like a man,” I replied, “ and my last exhortation to those who witness my end, will be vengeance on my murderers.”

“ Hush ! my son,” replied the priest. “ As thou hopest forgiveness, thou must render it. Leave us, good Pedro, alone. I would hear his confession ; and, for his soul’s sake, persuade this youthful sinner to die in a holier mood.”

The jailer bowed—laid down his light—withdrew—and, having secured the door, left me to the pious admonitions of my ghostly comforter.

Before the sound of the keeper's steps was lost in the distant passage, the monk suddenly flung back his cowl, and displayed a dark and vindictive countenance.

“ Juan Moreno, it is no shaveling who speaks to thee, but a devoted comrade of thy brother. I have planned thy escape: hear and attend to what I say. At the end of the stone corridor without the door there is a window that opens on the market-place. It is, to all appearance, strongly secured with iron stanchions; but several of the bars have been sawed through; and could you but quit this cell, the rest were easy. There is but one way—it is simple and sure—when the keeper comes here at midnight stab him to the heart, and hasten to the outlet I have described. There I, with some trusty companions, will be waiting. Whistle twice, and we will know thou art at the grate. Take these, and hide them until they are wanted;” and he gave me a dagger, a pistol, some food, and a flask of wine.

“ Drink,” he said, “ and when the time comes

for action, think of Vicente Moreno, remember thy martyred brother, and strike home to the heart of one of his murderers. But I must free thee from thy fetters ;” and stooping, he unlocked the chains, told me his plans again, and exhorted me to be prompt and resolute. I needed nothing to rouse my vengeance ; and, hiding the weapons and the wine beneath the mattress, waited the jailer’s coming, whose steps were heard advancing along the vaulted passage.

“ Well,” he said, “ holy father, hast thou made any progress in fitting this youth for death ?”

“ Alas ! no :” replied the false monk. “ For one so young, he appears desperately hardened. Wilt thou think on what I have said to thee, Juan ? and by all you value, follow my advice, I conjure you.”

“ I will do as the brother of Vicente Moreno should do ; and to the latest hour of existence, I will remember his wrongs, and imprecate curses on his enemies.”

“Now, by St. Jerome,” exclaimed the keeper, “I will witness thy dying pangs upon the gallows, with as much pleasure as I looked upon those of the rebel whom you speak of. Come, holy father, leave the young brigand to himself, and let him amuse himself with the prospect of a hempen necklace until to-night, when I will bring him the last loaf he will require at my hands.”

He said—followed the disguised Guerilla, and I was left once more in solitude and darkness.

Had I felt one sting of compunction in robbing a human being of life so suddenly, the remarks of the truculent scoundrel, in allusion to my brother's death, would have removed it. I ate the food, drank the wine sparingly, concealed the weapons in my bosom, and coolly waited for the hour when the work of vengeance should commence.

Midnight came—the deep-toned bell of Santa Margarita told the hour, and sounded the knell of my first victim. Pedro entered the cell as he usually did; and when he had laid down the

loaf and pitcher, informed me that one hour after daybreak, I should be required to be ready.

“ You, I presume, intend to witness the ceremony,” I said carelessly.

“ I would not take a doubloon, and miss the sight,” he replied. “ Youngster, you have already cost me a broken head”—and he pointed to his bandages. “ In his mad attempt to save you, I received this blow from Vicente Moreno.”

“ And this from Juan”—I added—striking the dagger to the hilt in his bosom. Thrice I repeated the blow as he was falling. The jailer gave one hollow groan, and all was over.

I took the light and hastened to the outlet, discovered it easily, and gave the appointed signal. Hands from without promptly removed the bars. I passed my body through the aperture, and found the comrade of my brother, and some trusty friends, waiting for me. By obscure streets we quitted Grenada, and evaded the French pickets; and at the hour appointed for

my execution, when I was expected to exhibit on the scaffold, I was kneeling in the mountains of Ronda, in the centre of a guerilla troop, swearing upon my brother's crucifix, eternal vengeance against his murderers.

But I have been tedious in my narrative, and it is time my band were moving. I shall give the word of readiness; and while my comrades are bridling their horses, I will tell you my last adventure.

I mentioned the names of Ciria and Fernandez, as the villains who had betrayed my brother, and consigned me to the dungeons of Grenada. Before three months passed I surprised the former in Almagro, and hanged him over his own door. Fernandez, aware that the same fate awaited him, retired to France, and thus evaded for a time my vengeance. His treachery was rewarded with an appointment in the enemy's commissariat; and, as his duties lay beyond the Pyrenees, he fancied himself secure.

Four days ago I found, by an intercepted despatch, that the traitor was quartered within the French lines, and expected another villain, named Cardonna, to meet him on some secret business at the village of Espalette. A pass from General Foy was enclosed, to enable the latter to clear the outposts. There was a chance—a dangerous one no doubt—but the dead called for vengeance, and I resolved to obtain it, or perish in the attempt. I left my band in their mountain bivouacs, passed the French sentries unmolested, and at nightfall entered the village.

To find out, without exciting any inquiries, the house where Fernandez lodged was difficult; but I tried and succeeded. His chamber was on one side of a cottage, occupied by French soldiers; and through the window I could observe him engaged with another man in overlooking military returns. Every word spoken I heard distinctly.

“You must fetch the muster-roll,” said Fer-

nandez. "Hasten back, that the business may be settled before Cardonna arrives."

"I shall be back in ten minutes," replied the other, as he rose and left the room.

I waited for half that time, then passed into the cottage unobserved, and entered the chamber boldly. Fernandez continued writing at the table—his back was to the door; and never doubting but it was his friend returning with the roll, he never raised his eyes from the returns. I marked the spot to strike, and with one blow divided the spine. The head dropped down upon the table, and not a sigh escaped his lips! With the point of my bloody knife I traced upon a slip of paper the name of "Juan Moreno," and glided from the cottage unquestioned and unnoticed. Was not that, my friend, brave revenge? To immolate, in the centre of an enemy's camp, the murderer of Vicente—the destroyer of Catalina.

My subsequent escape was truly hazardous. I hid myself during the day in a hollow bank that

overhung the river, and at night succeeded in reaching the bridge—the termination you know yourself.

And now you have heard from my own lips the causes which have made my name so formidable to the invaders. Had I not been driven to the mountains by oppression, I should have dreamed my life peacefully away—and Juan Moreno would have lived, and died, and been forgotten. Cruelty turned my blood to gall, and changed my very nature. At manhood this hand was stainless as a schoolboy's—at thirty the blood of fifty victims reeks upon it. Human joys and pleasures are lost upon me. For me beauty has no charms, and gold is merely dross. Yonder mule is laden with Napoleons; and, by heaven, I would not take the burden beyond that rivulet, only that I employ it in furthering my revenge. Once I could hang over a harp, and feel its music at my heart—now the roar of cannon, the crash of battle, or, sweeter still, the death-groan of an enemy, is the only melody for me. Living, mine

shall be “war to the knife!”—and when I die, whether it be on the scaffold or the field, my last breath shall be a curse upon the oppressor. Ho, Carlos! my horse. And now farewell. You and I shall probably never meet again. May you be happy; and when you hear that Juan Moreno is no more, ask how he died.”

He gave the word to march—sprang lightly to the saddle—and, at the sudden turning of an alpine pass, waved a last adieu to O'Connor, and disappeared.



THE FALL OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

The tale of war still bears a painful sound—
I see in captured towns but mangled corpses—
I hear in victory's shouts but dying groans.

M. G. LEWIS.



CHAPTER XI.

THE FALL OF ST. SEBASTIAN.

WHEN Soult retreated through the passes of the Pyrenees by Maya, Roncesvalles, and Echalan, the British and their allies resumed the positions from which they had been forced, and re-established their head-quarters at Lezaca. A period of comparative inactivity succeeded. Immediate operations could not be commenced on either side — the enemy had been too severely repulsed to permit their becoming assailants again; while, on the other hand, Wellington would not be justified in crossing the frontier and entering a hostile country, with Pamplona and

St. Sebastian garrisoned by the French, and in his rear.

Nothing could be more magnificent than the positions of the British brigades. For many a mile along the extended line of occupation, huts crowning the heights or studding the deep valleys below them, showed the rude dwellings of the mighty mass of human beings collected in that alpine country. At night the scene was still more picturesque. The irregular surface of the sierras sparkled with a thousand watch-fires, and the bivouacs of the allies exhibited all the varieties of light and shadow which an artist loves to copy. To the occupants themselves, the views obtained from their elevated abodes were grand and imposing. One while obscured in fog, the hum of voices alone announced that their comrades were beside them,—while at another the sun bursting forth in cloudless beauty displayed a varied scene, glorious beyond imagination. At their feet the fertile plains of France presented themselves,—above, ranges of magnificent

heights towered in majestic grandeur to the skies, and stretched into distance beyond the range of sight.

That portion of the Rifles with which our story chiefly lies, had resumed their old quarters at the bridge, and occupied the same bivouac, from which Soult's advance had obliged them to retire. Although no military movements were made, this inactive interval of a vigorous campaign was usefully employed by the allied commander, in organizing anew the regiments that had suffered most, concentrating the divisions, replacing exhausted stores, and perfecting the whole materiel of the army. Those of the British near the coast, compared with the corps that were blockading Pamplona, lived comfortably in their mountain bivouacs. The task of covering the blockade was the most disagreeable that falls to the soldier's lot. Exposed to cold and rain, continually on the alert, and yet engaged in a duty devoid of enterprise and interest, nothing could be more wearying to the troops employed; and

desertions, which during active service were infrequent, became numerous, and especially among the Spaniards and Irish.

It was a wet day,—a thick mist hung over the valleys, and shut out distant objects from the view of the light troops cantoned on the heights of Santa Barbara. The wooden hut was but thinly tenanted—for, alas! several of the brave youths who had been formerly its occupants, had found a soldier's grave during the late combats in the mountains, or fallen before the shattered bastions of Saint Sebastian. Although not engaged in the investment of that fortress, the division had furnished a portion of the volunteers, who formed the storming party on the morning of the assault,—and of that gallant band, two-thirds died before the breach, or were placed *hors de combat* in the hospitals.

In the annals of modern warfare there is no conflict recorded so sanguinary and so desperate as the storming of that well-defended breach. During the blockade every resource of military

ingenuity was tried by the French governor—and the failure of the first assault, and the subsequent raising of the siege, imboldened the garrison and rendered them the more confident of holding out, until Soult could advance and succour them. The time from which the battering guns had been withdrawn, until they were again replaced in the works, had been assiduously employed in constructing new defences and strengthening the old ones. But though the place when reinvested was more formidable than before, the besiegers appeared only the more determined to reduce it—Santa Clara, a bluff and rocky island commanding the landing place, was carried after an obstinate defence—a mortar battery was erected to shell the castle from across the bay—while a storm of round and case shot was maintained so vigorously, that in a short time the fire of the enemy was nearly silenced.

The night before the storm was well fitted to harbinger the day of slaughter that succeeded,—a dreadful tempest of thunder, lightning and

rain came on with darkness, and amid the uproar of elemental fury; three mines loaded with 1500 lbs. of powder were sprung by the besiegers, and the sea-wall blown down.

Morning broke gloomily—an intense mist obscured every object — and the work of slaughter was for a time delayed. At nine the sea-breeze cleared away the fog—the sun shone gloriously out—and in two hours the forlorn hope issued from the trenches. The columns succeeded, and every gun from the fortress that could bear, opened on them with shot and shells. The appearance of the breach was perfectly delusive—nothing living could reach the summit—no courage, however desperate, could overcome the difficulties—they were alike unexpected and insurmountable. In vain the officers rushed forward, and devotedly were they followed by their men. From intrenched houses behind the breach, the traverses, and the ramparts of the curtain, a withering discharge of musketry was poured on the assailants, while the Mirador and Prince batteries swept

the approaches with their guns. To survive this concentrated fire was impossible; the forlorn hope were cut off to a man, and the heads of the columns annihilated. At last the debouches were choked with the dead and wounded, and a further passage to the breach rendered impracticable, from the heap of corpses that were piled upon each other.

Then, in that desperate moment, when hope might have been supposed to be over, an expedient unparalleled in the records of war was resorted to. The British batteries opened on the curtain, and the storming parties heard with surprise the roar of cannon in their rear, while, but a few feet above their heads, the iron shower hissed horribly, sweeping away the enemy and their defences. This was the moment for a fresh effort. Another brigade was moved forward, and favoured by an accidental explosion upon the curtain, which confused the enemy while it encouraged the assailants, the *terre-plain* was mounted, and the French driven from the works.

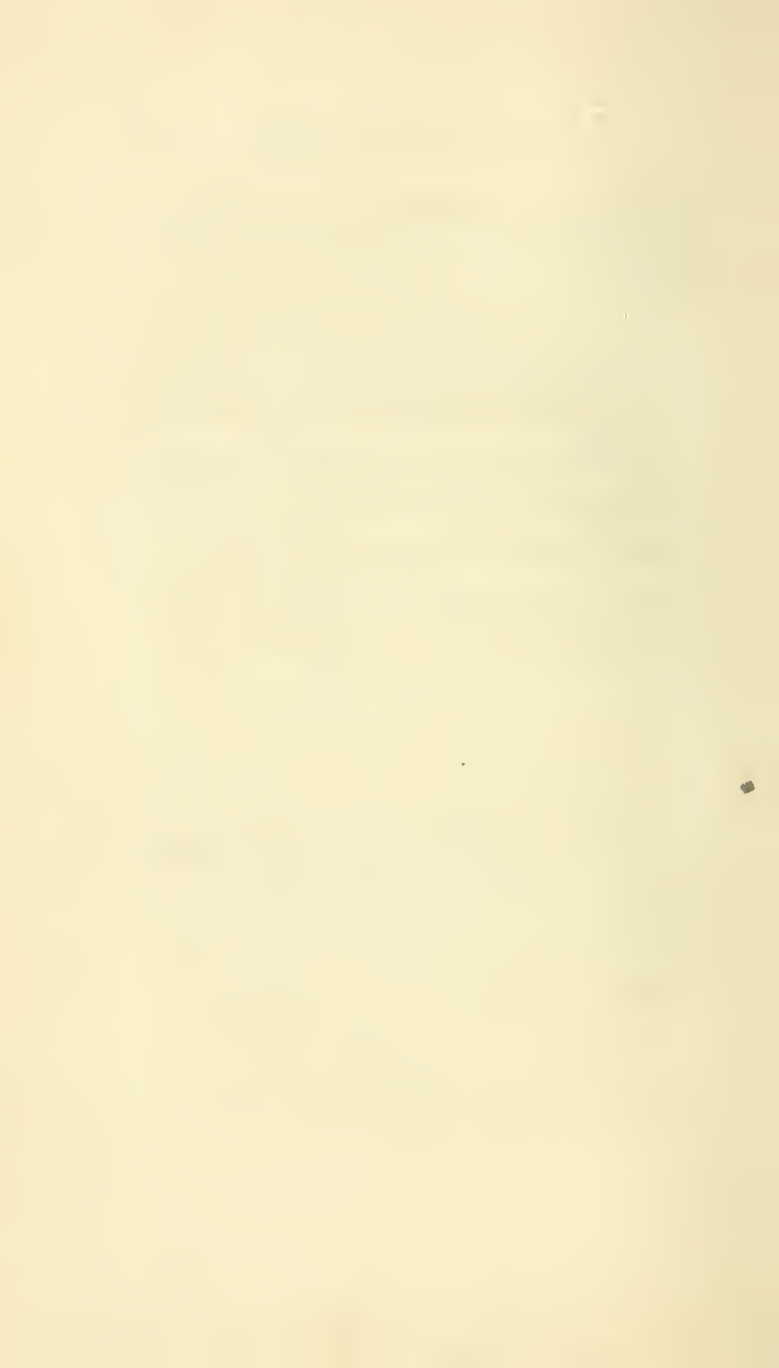
A long and obstinate resistance was continued in the streets, which were in many places barricaded, but by five in the evening opposition ceased—and the town was in the possession of the British.

A night of frightful excesses followed the capture of the city. Plunder and violence were raging through every corner of the place—the town was partially on fire—while, as if to add to the horror of the scene, the elements were convulsed, and it thundered and lightened awfully. Over the transactions of that night a veil should be drawn—for if ever men were demonized, these were the captors of St. Sebastian.

What rendered the assault upon the fortress more interesting was, that, at the same time, while the operations to reduce it were being carried on, the French recrossed the Bidassoa in great force, and attacked the Spaniards at San Marcial. In the affair that succeeded, the allies behaved most gallantly. They held the position, repulsed Soult's attempt to dislodge them, and obliged him to retire with immense loss. The number of the French killed

was never correctly known, but nearly a thousand perished in forcing the bridge at Vera, which was held by a part of the light division.

An animated description of the fall of St. Sebastian, by a survivor of those who volunteered from the rifles, had occasioned some observations on the advantage of night attacks. O'Connor had been frequently appealed to upon disputed points. Gradually a deeper interest to learn the particulars of the assault on Badajoz was excited, and none could better describe that scene of blood than he who had led the storming party. The rain continued falling with unabated violence, and all the inmates of the wooden hut were collected round the rough bench which formed the table. To their unanimous request the gallant soldier yielded a goodhumoured assent, and thus narrated that glorious affair, which widowed many a dame, and left many a maid "lamenting."



THE STORM OF BADAJOZ.

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt ;
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after-carnage done.

SIEGE OF CORINTH.

Men, like wild beasts, when once they have tasted
blood, acquire an appetite for it.

SOUTHEY.

And he had learned to love—I know not why,
For this in such as him seems strange of mood—
The helpless looks of blooming infancy
Even in its earliest nature.

CHILDE HAROLD.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORM OF BADAJOZ.

“ BADAJOZ !” exclaimed O’Connor, with enthusiasm, “ many a gallant deed—many a bitter recollection are associated with thee. Thousands of the best troops that England and France ever sent into the field are mouldering before thy bastions—and many a widowed wife and fatherless child will curse the name that recalls the loss of their protectors !

Never shall I forget the morning of the 9th of March, when the light, third, and fourth divisions crossed the Tagus by a bridge of boats, and concentrating at Elvas, pushed on to Merida and

Lerena. Never was an army in higher spirit—and all were anxious to come in contact with the enemy. On the 16th Badajoz was to be invested. The pontoon bridge was thrown across the Guadiana; and, though fiercely opposed by the French cavalry, the river was crossed, and we sat down before this celebrated fortress.

Badajoz is easily described. Round one portion of the town the rivulets Calamon and Rivelas sweep, and unite with the Guadiana, which flows in the face of the works, and in front of the heights of Saint Christoval. The castle stands nearly above the union of these rivers. The fortifications are exceedingly strong—the bastions and curtains regular—while formidable outworks—the forts of Pardelaras, Picarina, and Saint Christoval—completed the exterior defences of a city that had already stood two sieges, and had since been strengthened with jealous attention and scientific skill.

The 17th was a day of peculiar interest; and the anniversary of our patron saint was employed

in reconnoitring the place, and determining the point on which our opening assault should be directed. The outwork of Picarina was selected for the first essay ; and in a tempest of wind and rain and favoured by the darkness, we broke ground within a hundred and forty paces of the fort. Three thousand men laboured throughout the night without a moment's cessation—and at dawn the garrison were astounded to see the first parallel completed.

All the next day, under a lively cannonade from the fort and town, we laboured vigorously. At night the rain came down in torrents, but we worked on, knee-deep in water. On the 19th the trenches were advancing rapidly, and some guns were already in battery—when Phillipon, alarmed for the safety of his best outwork, determined to sally, and attempt the destruction of our labours.

During the morning an unusual bustle was apparent in the city and fort ; but the soldiers, up to the waist in water, continued pushing on the works. At noon, profiting by a dense fog,

the sallyports of the fortress were thrown open, and eighteen hundred of the enemy rushed on us with fixed bayonets. A short and sanguinary struggle ensued. On the left, the French were driven back to their own gates; and though they surprised the workmen on the right, and injured a part of the trenches, the sortie was on the whole disastrous to the garrison, and cost them above four hundred killed or prisoners. We lost a number of officers and men; but the French gained nothing by the affair but a few intrenching tools. They carried off a number of spades and shovels, for which Philippon gave a dollar each.

The weather was dreadful: nothing but a torrent of rain. The water in the trenches, in some places, took the men above the middle, while the earth crumbled away, and prevented us from making any progress in forwarding the breaching batteries. The river rose—the flood swept off our pontoon bridge—we were cut off from our supplies—insulated from the covering force—and

as badly off for food and shelter as might be. But we laboured on—the weather changed—the 24th was fine. The French attempted to check our efforts to place guns in battery and establish magazines, by an increased storm of artillery. Our men fell in dozens—the engineers, who directed the works, and exposed themselves with reckless devotion, were momentarily shot down—shells dropped frequently into the trenches—powder casks were repeatedly exploded while being conveyed to the magazine. Under all these discouraging circumstances, the works were completed; and, on the dawning of the 25th, two batteries were unmasked, and opened with a tremendous fire on the outwork of Picurina at the short distance of one hundred and forty paces. Of course the town and fort turned every gun within range upon ours; but so terrible and effective was the point-blank service of our two-and-thirties, that at evening a breach was declared practicable, and Lord Wellington, no admirer of the Fabian system of delay, deter-

mined, when it became dark, to carry Picurina by storm.

Well, the storming-party was selected from a part of Picton's division, and we of the light were allowed to volunteer. On we went with scaling ladders; but the ditch was so immensely deep that it was impossible to cross it. At last we broke down the gate—on rushed our fellows with the bayonet—the French grenadiers as sturdily resisted them—a regular steel affair ensued; and though a strong support moved from the town to assist the defenders of the fort, in a short time all opposition ceased—and Picurina was ours.

I was slightly wounded in the *melée* within the gate, and was *hors de combat* till the morning of the 5th of April. I was then quite recovered and able to rejoin my regiment, and fortunately in good time to witness the splendid night attack, which ended in the capture of this well-defended fortress.

On the 6th the breaches were reported practicable by the engineers, and the assault was fixed

for eight o'clock that evening. The day was beautiful, and when the order was issued marking the positions the different brigades should occupy, the soldiers were in high spirits, and set merrily to work cleaning their arms and appointments, as if preparing for a dress parade. On individual officers the effect that note of preparation caused was very opposite. One, as brave a fellow as ever breathed, passed me apparently in deep abstraction. Suddenly he seemed to awake from an uneasy reverie, recognised me, and shook me by the hand.

“God bless you, Edward,” he said. “Farewell, old boy; before midnight I shall be in another world.” I laughed at him. “Yes, O'Connor, it will be so. I would not own it to another; but you and I have fought side by side ere now, and you will acquit me of timidity. This, O'Connor, is my last fight! Will you oblige me in one matter? When you came up I was just thinking which of our fellows I should ask the favour of.”

“Any thing, my dear Jack, that I can do, you may command.”

“Come aside,” he said—and we walked behind the huts. “Here,”—and he put a parcel into my hand—“when I am gone, have that little packet conveyed to England, and delivered as it is addressed; and just add a line or two, to say that it never left my bosom until I confided it to you.”

It was a leather case, and I fancy contained a miniature and some letters. The direction was to a young lady, who, if report was to be believed, was deeply attached to my gallant friend. I took the parcel. Once more Weyland and I shook hands. We parted, never to meet again—his foreboding was verified—he perished at the head of the storming party in front of the lesser breach.

I had scarcely deposited the case in the breast of my jacket, when Dillon, of the 2d, encountered me—his face beaming with delight—his spirits buoyant as the schoolboy’s, when an unexpected holiday is announced by his master.

“Well met, O’Connor,” he cried, as he took my hand. “Here we are a brace of subs to day, and to morrow we shall be captains. We’re both at the head of the list, and surely some of the old fellows will get a quietus before morning. Egad, to morrow you and I will drink to our further promotion, if there be a sound bottle of Sherry in Phillipon’s cellar.”

“Yes, my dear Dillon, but you must recollect that our skins are not more impervious than those of other men to steel and lead. There’s work cut out for us, take my word for it, before we’ll be made free of the Frenchman’s wine-bin.”

“Pshaw!—I would not give a dollar to insure my company; and auld Clooty will never leave in the lurch a steady servant like you, Ned. Hang it, I wish it were dark, and the work begun. I intend to sup in a convent to night.”

“Indeed! then ‘would it were supper time, and all were well’”—and we parted.

Twilight came, the sun set gloriously, and many an hundred eyes looked their last upon

him that evening. Soon after eight the regiments were under arms, and the roll of each called over in an under voice. A death-like silence prevailed—the division (the light) formed behind the quarry in front of Santa Maria, and after a pause of half an hour, the forlorn hope passed quietly along, supported by a storming party consisting of three hundred volunteers. I was attached to the former. We moved silently—not a man coughed or whispered—and in three minutes afterwards the division followed.

At that moment the deep bell of the cathedral of St. John struck ten*—the most perfect silence reigned around, and except the softened foot-fall of the storming parties as they struck the turf with military precision, not a movement was audible. A terrible suspense—a horrible still-

* A rocket rose from the town, and some dozen blue-lights and fire-balls were flung from the parapets, and threw a lurid glare on the ground in front of the ramparts. Gradually the light died away—a deeper gloom succeeded—“Forward!” was only whispered.

ness—darkness—a compression of the breathing—the dull and ill-defined outline of the town—the knowledge that similar and simultaneous movements were making on other points—the certainty that two or three minutes would probably involve the forlorn hope in ruin, or make it the beacon-light to victory—all these made the heart throb quicker, and long for the bursting of the storm, when wild success should crown our daring, or hope and life should end together.

On we went; one solitary musket was discharged beside the breach, but none answered it. The light division moved forward rapidly, closing up in columns at quarter distance. We reached the ditch—the ladders were lowered—on rushed the forlorn hope—on went the storming party. The division were now on the brink of the sheer descent, when a gun boomed from the parapet. The earth trembled—a mine was fired—an explosion—an infernal hissing from lighted fuses succeeded—and, like the raising of a curtain on

the stage in the hellish glare, the French lining the ramparts in crowds, the English storming parties descending the ditch, were placed as distinctly visible to each other as if the hour was noontide!

A tremendous fire from the guns of the place, which had been laid upon the approaches to the breach, followed the explosion; but undauntedly the storming-party cheered, and bravely the French answered it. A murderous scene ensued, for the breach was utterly impassable. Notwithstanding the withering fire of musketry from the parapets—light artillery brought immediately to bear upon the breach—and the grape from every gun upon the works that could play upon the assailants or supporting columns, the British mounted. Hundreds were thrown back—and hundreds promptly succeeded them. Almost unharmed themselves, the French dealt death around; and secure within defences that even in daylight and to a force unopposed, would prove almost insurmountable, they ridiculed the mad

attempt; and while they viewed from the parapets a thousand victims in the ditch, they called in derision to the broken columns, and invited them to come on.

I, though unwounded, was hurled from the breach, and fell into the lunette, where, for a few minutes, I had some difficulty to escape suffocation. The guns of the bastions swept the place where I was lying, and the constant splash of grape upon the surface of the water was a sound any thing but agreeable. The cheers had ceased—the huzzas of the enemy at our repulse had died away—and from the ramparts they amused themselves with picking off any one they pleased. Fire-balls occasionally lighted up the ditch, and showed a mass of wretched men lying in the mud and water, mobbed together, unable to offend, and, poor wretches! at the mercy of the enemy, for retreat was impracticable. As the French continued hurling cart-wheels, planks, and portions of the masonry of the parapet, which our own battering guns had destroyed, it was pitiable

to see the feeble efforts of the wounded, as they vainly strove to crawl from beneath the rampart, and avoid the murderous missiles that were momentarily showered down. Now and again, the gurgling noise of some one drowning close beside was heard in the interval of the firing; while the groaning of those from whom life was ebbing—the cursing of others in their agonies—joined to the demon laugh which was frequent from the breach above, gave the passing scene an infernal colouring, that no time shall ever obliterate from the memory of him who witnessed it.

Yet never was the indomitable courage of Britain more signally displayed than during the continuance of this murderous attempt. Although at dusk, when the English batteries ceased their fire, the breaches were sufficiently shattered to be practicable, during the three hours that intervened before the assault commenced, Philippon had exhausted his matchless ingenuity in rendering the entrance of a storming-party by the ruined bastions utterly impossible. Harrows and planks,

studded with spikes and bound firmly by iron chains, were suspended in front of the battered parapet like a curtain—a deep retrenchment cut off the breach from the interior, even had an enemy surmounted it—and a line of *chevaux-de-frise*, bristling with sword blades, protected the top. With these insurmountable obstacles before them, and death rained upon them from every side, even in handfuls the light and fourth divisions continued their desperate attempts; and many of the bravest, after struggling to the summit of the bastion, were shot down in their vain attempts to tear defences away, which no living man could clamber over.

While the sanguinary struggle was proceeding in the bastions of Trinidad and Santa Maria, the castle was escaladed on the right, and the bastion of San Vincente afterwards, by the fifth division on the opposite quarter of the town. After a fierce contest of an hour, the third division mounted by their ladders, and driving all before them at the bayonet's point, fairly carried the

place by storm, and remained in possession of the castle. Nothing could surpass the daring gallantry of the escalade; and the heap of dead men and broken ladders strewn next morning before the lofty walls, showed how vigorously the enemy had resisted it.

Leith's division were unfortunately delayed from their scaling ladders not arriving for an hour after the grand assault had been made upon the breaches. But they nobly redeemed lost time; and while the Portuguese Caçadores distracted the garrison by a false attack on Pardaleras, a brigade of the fifth overcame every opposition, and, supported by the rest of the division, drove all before them from the ramparts, and established themselves in the town.

It is astonishing, even in the spring-tide of success, how the most trivial circumstances will damp the courage of the bravest, and check the most desperate in their career. The storming-party of the fifth had escaladed a wall of thirty feet with wretched ladders—forced an uninjured

palisade—descended a deep counterscarp—and crossed the lunette behind it—and this was effected under a converging fire from the bastions, and a well-sustained fusilade, while but a few of the assailants could force their way together, and form on the rampart when they got up. But the leading sections persevered until the brigade was completely lodged within the parapet; and now united, and supported by the division who followed fast, what could withstand their advance?

They were sweeping forward with the bayonet—the French were broken and dispersed—when, at this moment of brilliant success, a port-fire, which a retreating gunner had flung upon the rampart, was discovered. A vague alarm seized the leading files—they fancied some mischief was intended—and imagined the success, which their own desperate gallantry had achieved, was but a *ruse* of the enemy to lure them to destruction. “It is a mine—and they are springing it!” shouted a soldier. Instantly the leaders of the storming-party turned. It was impossible for

their officers to undeceive them. The French perceived the panic—rallied and pursued—and friends and foes came rushing back tumultuously upon a supporting regiment, (the 38th) that was fortunately formed in reserve upon the ramparts. This momentary success of the besieged was dearly purchased—a volley was thrown closely in—a bayonet rush succeeded—and the French were scattered before the fresh assailants, never to form again. The fifth division poured in. Every thing gave way that opposed it. The cheering was heard above the fire—the bugles sounded an advance—the enemy became distracted and disheartened—and again the light and fourth divisions, or, alas! their skeletons, assisted by Hay's brigade, advanced to the breaches. Scarcely any opposition was made. They entered—and Badajoz was our own! Philippon, finding all lost, retired across the river to Fort San Christoval, and early next day surrendered.

During this doubtful conflict, Wellington, with his staff, occupied a commanding position in front

of the *tete-de-pont* that defends the great stone bridge across the Guadiana. Those who happened to be around him describe the scene, as witnessed from the heights above San Christoval, as grand and awfully imposing. The deep silence after the divisions moved to their respective positions—the chime of the town clock—the darkness of the night—the sudden blaze of rockets and blue-lights from the garrison, followed by an interval of deeper obscurity—the springing of the mine, succeeded by the roar of artillery, and bursting of shells—while musketry and grenades kept up an endless spattering—all this, added to the uncertainty of the assault, must have tried even the iron nerve of the conqueror of Napoleon's best commanders.

Presently an officer rode up at speed, to say that the attempt to force the breaches had failed, and the result had been most disastrous. Pale, but unmoved, the English general issued calmly his orders for a fresh brigade to support the light division; and the aide-de-camp gal-

loped off to have it executed. An interval of harrowing suspense followed. Another of the staff came up in haste. "My lord, General Picton is in the castle." "Ha! are you certain?" "Yes, my lord. I entered it with the 88th." "'Tis well—let him keep it. Withdraw the divisions from the breach." An hour after, another horseman announced the fifth division to have completely succeeded in escalading San Vincent. "Bravely done! Badajoz is ours!"—was the cool half-muttered observation of the British commandant.

Well—I have been tedious—but these boys seem interested in the details of occurrences which marked that fearful night, and I shall now relate the strange adventure that consigned an orphan to my charge.

When our division entered the town all opposition was at an end; for the French, fearing that a dreadful retaliation would ensue, precipitately abandoned the city, and secured themselves in Fort Christoval until they effected a capitu-

lation, and were permitted to retire to Elvas. In the morning I obtained a few hours repose, notwithstanding the deafening yells of the excited soldiery, and their incessant discharge of musketry, as they went firing through the streets, or blew open the doors of the wine-houses, and indeed of all other dwellings, which were vainly closed against them. I had seen the breaches in all their horrors—I had again crossed them in daylight—and I turned my steps towards the castle and bastion of San Vincent, to view the places where my more fortunate comrades had forced their way.

It was nearly dusk, and the few hours while I slept had made a frightful change in the condition and temper of the soldiery. In the morning they were obedient to their officers, and preserved the semblance of subordination; now they were in a state of furious intoxication—discipline was forgotten—and the splendid troops of yesterday had become a fierce and sanguinary rabble, dead to every touch of human feeling, and filled with

every demoniac passion that can brutalize the man. The town was in horrible confusion, and on every side frightful tokens of military license met the eye. One street, as I approached the castle, was almost choked up with broken furniture; for the houses had been gutted from the cellar to the garret, the partitions torn down, and even the beds ripped and scattered to the winds, in the hope that gold might be found concealed. A convent at the end of the strada of Saint John was in flames; and I saw more than one wretched nun in the arms of a drunken soldier.

Farther on the confusion seemed greater. Brandy and wine casks were rolled out before the stores; some were full, some half drunk, but more staved in mere wantonness, and the liquors running through the kennel. Many a harrowing scream saluted the ear of the passer by—many a female supplication was heard asking in vain for mercy. How could it be otherwise, when it is remembered that twenty thousand furious and licentious madmen were loosed upon an immense

population, among which many of the loveliest women upon earth might be found? All within that devoted city was at the disposal of an infuriated army, over whom, for the time, control was lost, aided by an infamous collection of camp followers, who were, if possible, more sanguinary and pitiless even than those who survived the storm!

It is useless to dwell upon a scene from which the heart revolts. I verily believe that few females in this beautiful town were saved that night from insult. The noblest and the beggar—the nun, and the wife and daughter of the artisan—youth and age—all were involved in general ruin. None were respected, and few consequently escaped. The madness of those desperate brigands was variously exhibited; some fired through doors and windows; others at the church bells; many, at the wretched inhabitants as they fled into the streets, to escape the bayonets of the savages who were demolishing their property within doors; while some wretches, as if blood

had not flowed in sufficient torrents already, shot from the windows their own companions as they staggered on below. What chances had the miserable inhabitants of escaping death, when more than one officer perished by the bullets and bayonets of the very men, whom a few hours before he had led to the assault?

As evening advanced, the streets became more dangerous, and after I had examined the spot from which the escalade of the castle had been effected, I determined to leave the fortress by the first sallyport, and return for the night to our half-deserted camp; for every one who could frame an excuse, had flocked into the luckless town for plunder, and the tents were in many places left without an occupant. Having been for a week quartered in the city after the last year's siege, I fancied that I could find my way to the flying bridge; but the attempt was not an easy one. A swarm of drunken rioters infested the road; and at last I resolved to leave the more frequented streets, and endeavour to free myself

from this infernal scene of tumult and villany, by a safer but more devious path.

I turned down an unfrequented lane. I remembered that a lamp before an image of the Virgin had formerly burned at the corner, but of course it had been unattended to during the horrors of the past night. Not fifty paces from the entrance, a dead man lay upon his face. I looked at the body carelessly—life was scarcely extinct, for the blood was oozing from an immense wound in the back; and as the jacket was still smoking, the musket of the assassin had probably been touching the wretched man, when the murderer discharged it. It was the corpse of a dragoon; he, of course, had stolen into the town for plunder, and the unhappy delinquent paid a deep penalty for his crime. He held a loaded pistol in his hand. I wrenched it from his grasp with difficulty; for even in death, he clutched it. I was now better armed, and I hurried down the lane in the direction of the sallyport.

This unpretending quarter appeared to have

partially escaped the ravages to which the better portion of the town had been exposed. Only a few of the outer doors were broken in, and momentarily as I proceeded, the yells and firing became more distant. Just at the bottom of the lane there was a large inn. Within all was quiet as the grave—business and bustle were over. No doubt the spoilers had been there, and, save in an upper window, not a light was to be seen. On coming up, the cause of its desolation was manifest. The outer door had been blown open, and a dozen casks, some spilt or staved, others lying untouched before the gate, showed too plainly that its remote situation had not screened it from the plunderers.

Two lanes branched off to the right and to the left. To choose between them puzzled me, and I halted to determine which I should trust myself to. I was still undetermined, when an uproar, in which several voices united, arose in the upper story of the deserted inn, and apparently in that room where I had observed the light burning.

The report of a musket was followed by a shriek so loud, so horrible, so long sustained, that even yet it peals upon my ear. I forgot all personal consideration—and, as if directed by a fatality, rushed into the gate, and ascended the staircase. Cries and curses directed me onwards. The door of the chamber from which they issued was unclosed. I sprang forward, and the scene within was infinitely worse than even the outrages I had witnessed could have harbingered.

Near the door, a Spaniard, whose dress and appearance were those of a wealthy farmer, or a small proprietor of land, was extended on the floor quite dead; and a ruffian in the uniform of one of the regiments of the third division, was standing over the body, busily engaged, as well as drunkenness would admit, in reloading his musket. Beyond the victim and his murderer a more horrible sight met the eye. The woman, whose piercing scream had attracted me to the scene of slaughter, was writhing in the last agonies of death, while a Portuguese Caçadore

coolly wiped the bayonet that had been reddened in her blood. What occurred on my entrance was the transaction of a few moments. Both ruffians turned their rage on me, and I endeavoured to anticipate them by commencing hostilities. With the pistol I had taken from the dragoon I shot the Irishman—I blush to say it—but he was my countryman—through the heart, and then attacked the Caçadore. In size and strength we were pretty fairly matched. He was armed with a fixed bayonet—I with a sabre, ground to the keenness of a knife; but his own crime gave me the advantage, and sealed his fate. He was a cool and dangerous cut-throat, and collecting all his energies for a rush, he thought to transfix me against the door. We had light enough for a brief combat, as the drapery and curtains of the room were in a blaze. He gathered himself for the trial—I was ready—he made a full lunge with all his force, but his foot slipped in the blood of her whom he had just massacred, and a slight parry averting his push, the bayonet

burst through the panel up to the socket, and the villain was at my mercy. As he vainly strove to disengage his weapon, I stepped back and struck him across the head. He fell forward. Thrice I repeated the cut—for the scoundrel was full of life—and I was not contented until his skull was fractured by reiterated blows, and the brain scattered against the wainscot. I see you shudder, Mortimer; you have yet to learn how quickly war will brutalize us. At your years I could not have treated a rabid dog so savagely; but that scene withered every feeling of human pity, and I for the time was as truculent as the villains I had dispatched.

The curtains blazed more fiercely, while I stood like a presiding demon above four bleeding corpses—the murderers and their victims. The blood of the dead Caçadore had spirted over me, and from hilt to point my sabre was crimsoned. On the floor a quantity of gold and silver coins were scattered, while the glare of the burning tapestry gave a wild and infernal light that fitted

well that scene of slaughter. I could stay no longer—the woodwork was already in flames—and a few minutes would wrap the devoted house in a sheet of fire. I stooped and picked a cartridge from the cartouch-box of the dead Irishman, to reload my pistol. Something beneath a chair sparkled. Was it the eyes of a dog? I removed the antique and cumbrous piece of furniture—and there a child, some three years old, had cowered for shelter! To leave it to perish in the flames was impossible. I caught it up—it never cried—for terror I suppose had taken away the power of utterance, and rushing from the room, found myself again in the street.

I had escaped one peril only to rush upon another. Seven or eight men were drinking from a spirit cask, which lay before the door of the burning hostelry. They were loaded with plunder of divers kinds—and with the little reason left, were endeavouring to secure it by leaving the sacked city and hastening to the camp. That camp they were not likely to find, for every wine-

butt in their route was duly tasted as they passed along.

My appearance was instantly observed. "It's one of the foreigners," said he who seemed to be the leader, as he remarked my dark uniform—"Shoot him, Jim!"

Fortunately the command was given in Irish, and I replied promptly in the same language. In a few moments we understood each other perfectly. They wanted to secure their booty, and I volunteered to be their leader, and effect a retreat.

To prohibit drinking for the future, under a threat of abandoning them instantly, was my first order; and it was, though reluctantly, acceded to. I next examined their arms, and ordered the muskets that had been discharged to be reloaded. The booty was next secured; and forming them into something like military order, I gave the word to march, and proceeded towards the sally-port, the leader of a banditti, whom no consideration, but an avaricious anxiety to save the pro-

duce of the night's villany, could have induced to quit a scene of violence and blood so congenial to their brutal fancies. I brought them and the hapless orphan safely from the town; although their own pugnacity, and the appearance of the rich booty they had obtained, involved us in several skirmishes with parties who were flocking into the city, on the same vile errand as that in which my "charge of foot" had been so successfully engaged.

"And did you discover who the murdered parents of the poor infant were?"

"Alas!—no. The orphan's parentage remains to this hour wrapped in obscurity. When, after two days and nights of violence and pillage, Lord Wellington with difficulty repressed those dreadful excesses, by marching in a Portuguese brigade, attended by the provost-marshal with the gallows and triangles, I hastened, as soon as I could venture it safely, to the place where I had witnessed the slaughter of the unfortunate strangers. The inn was burned to the ground; but I

made out the proprietors, who had obtained a temporary shelter in one of the detached offices that had escaped the flames. They could give me no information, nor did they even know the names of their murdered inmates. They, poor victims! had arrived in Badajoz from a distant part of Andalusia only the day before we invested the town, and remained there during the siege. Having a large sum of money in their possession, they fancied themselves safer in the city than in attempting to remove homewards, as the roads in the vicinity were infested by guerillas and professed banditti. They stopped accordingly, till Badajoz fell; and, in common with many hundreds of unfortunates, their lives and property paid a sad penalty for the obstinacy of Philippon's defence."

"And what became of the poor orphan, O'Connor?" asked O'Shaughnessy.

"I sent him to England, placed him at a school, and when he is old enough he shall be a soldier. Should I fall, he is not forgotten. But

come—to bed—to bed. Sound be your slumbers, boys!—before the night of to-morrow many a stirring spirit will be quiet enough—and on the sward of a battle field, “sleep the sleep that knows not breaking.”

THE DEAD LIEUTENANT.

Vain was ev'ry ardent vow,
Never yet did Heaven allow,
Love so warm, so wild, to last.

MOORE.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEAD LIEUTENANT.

THERE is no sadder office imposed upon a soldier than to arrange the simple property of some departed comrade for the rude auction to which, when death occurs on service, the assets of the fallen are submitted. Every thing recalls the deceased ; and every article, however trifling, renews past recollections. In that jacket, haply, the tale was told which set the table in a roar ; and these epaulets may have sparkled in the ball-room, or glittered on the field of battle.

In a convent adjoining the bridge of Vera, a young officer had expired shortly after the night encounter between the British light troops and the French column, which forced that passage in

their retreat. Though vastly superior in force, and with darkness and a storm favouring the attack, the posts were gallantly contested; and when the rifles were obliged to yield to numbers, they occupied the convent walls, and kept up a fire so incessant and well directed, that the narrow bridge was heaped with corpses, and the loss of the retiring enemy was computed at nearly a thousand men. The British casualties were comparatively trifling—and Frederick Selby was the only officer that fell.

Nature had never designed Selby for the trade of arms. His constitution was weak, and his appearance effeminate. He was shy and timid among strangers—wanted decision to seize on fortune if she smiled—and if she chose to frown, he had no reactive spirit to bear the rub, and trust boldly to the chances of to-morrow. From his reserved character he had no intimates—and avoided all friendly intercourse with his brother officers. On service he performed his duty as a thing of course, but never displayed the ardour

of a martial spirit; and in the winter season when a campaign ceased, he seemed to dream his life away; how he employed himself in cantonments none knew, and indeed none inquired.

He was the second son of a gentleman of considerable fortune, and had, as it was generally understood, been intended for the church. He graduated accordingly at one of the universities; when circumstances occurred which changed the colour of his profession, and sent to the field one far better suited for the cloister.

Death, however, disclosed the secret, that while living he had kept so closely; and in his writing-case, the memorials of an unfortunate attachment were found. He had loved a female of humble parentage, and, it would appear, that a sentimental engagement had been formed, discovered, and dissolved. To remove him far from the object of his passion, his father had purchased a commission, and sent him upon service. The wide sea rolled between him and the forbidden fair one; but the heart remained un-

changed—and he died cherishing a passion which time and absence could not subdue.

That most of the private hours of the deceased were spent in literary composition, many fragments in prose and poetry, mixed among letters from members of his family, proved. The effusions generally alluded to the unhappy attachment that had sent him from his native land ; and some of them were addressed to his mistress. These were, of course, carefully destroyed. One, however, was of a different description—it seemed some legendary tale connected with the ancient house of Selby. On turning over a few pages O'Brien ascertained that there was nothing in the manuscript to render its destruction necessary ; and, as the parades were over and military duties ended for the day, he amused his companions in the bivouac, by reading them the legend of “ Barbara Maxwell.”

END OF VOL. II.

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